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THE KING'S CLASSICS UNDER THE GENERAL EDITORSHIP OF PROFESSOR I. GOLLANCZ, LITT.D.

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A PETITE PALLACE OF PETTIE HIS PLEASURE EDITED BY PROFESSOR I. GOLLANCZ

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A petite Pallace

of Pettie *his pleaſure:*

Contaynyng many prętie Hyſtories
by him ſet foorth in comely colours,
and moſt delightfully diſcourſed.

Omne tulit punctum,
qui miſcuit vtile dulci.

Title page reproduced from the Editio Princeps of 1576.

A PETITE PALLACE OF PETTIE HIS PLEASURE CONTAINING MANY PRETIE HISTORIES BY HIM SET FORTH IN COMELY COLOURS AND MOST DELIGHTFULLY DISCOURSED. VOL. I.

Pettie, George

CHATTO AND WINDUS, PUBLISHERS
LONDON 1908

150086

"It is a World to see how Englishmen desire to hear finer Speech than the Language will allow, to eat finer Bread than is made of Wheat, to wear finer Cloth than is wrought of Wool."—*Lyly.*

PREFACE

The Source of Euphuism.—Though "*A Petite Pallace of Pettie his Pleasure*" is now first edited in modern times, the book is well known to students of literature as the direct precursor of Lyly's Euphuism. It is generally accepted that Lyly found in Pettie's less famous work "a complete model of style, which he followed with hardly any, if any, addition."[1] The "*Petite Pallace*" has been re-discovered in connexion with the fascinating investigation into the history of Euphuism, its sources, and characteristics. John Lyly's direct debt has recently been examined and illustrated by Mr. Warwick Bond, in

[1] Warwick Bond: *John Lyly*, I. 136 ff. On the history of Euphuism, cp. Landmann, *Der Euphuismus: sein Wesen, seine Quelle, seine Geschichte*, 1881; C. G. Child, *John Lyly and Euphuism*, 1894, etc. Mr. Bond's Essay is a most noteworthy summary of the whole subject, and as a contribution to the study of Euphuism goes far beyond the work of his predecessors, more particularly in its many references to Pettie's "*Petite Pallace*."

his important edition of Lyly's works (Oxford, 1902). All the characteristics of Euphuism are discoverable in Pettie, namely, balance of phrases, antitheses, rhetorical questions, alliteration (simple and transverse), syllabic and verbal likeness, puns and word-play, anecdotes, allusions (historical and mythological), similes (from natural and unnatural philosophy), proverbs,[1] the subordination of action to discourse and reflections, "misogynist tirades" (though both works are dedicated "to the Gentlewomen of England").[2]

All these elements of style Lyly worked up to a degree far beyond that reached by Pettie; and this is especially noteworthy in the matter of similes derived from beasts and precious stones—the most characteristic trick of the Euphuistic style. Drayton ("*Of Poets and Poesie*") praised Sidney, for that he

> "did first reduce
> Our tongue from Lillie's writing then in use;
> Talking of Stones, Stars, Plants, of Fishes, Flyes,
> Playing with words, and idle similes."

[1] A selection of typical proverbs and sayings will be found at the end of the Preface.

[2] These "tirades" were evidently intended to please and amuse the ladies. Pettie "on women's rights" certainly shows no misogynism, though charming banter; II. 159.

There are but few references in Pettie's "*Pallace*" to stones, stars, plants, fishes, and flies, and to fabulous beasts, though Pettie's 'stone of Scilicia'[1] suggested Lyly's 'stone of Sicilia,' and Lyly 'pilfered' from Pettie the simile of the 'herb Camomile,'[2] parodied by Falstaff. There are other undoubted bits of evidence showing Lyly's debt to Pettie in this respect; Lyly took many a hint from his predecessor, and bettered the example. The Panther, the Phœnix, the Camelion, are met with in Pettie, but one seeks in vain for Lyly's monstrosities —'the fish Scolopidus,' 'the serpent Porphyrius,' and other beasts found in or evolved from Pliny's *Natural History*, or from Pseudo-Plutarch.[3]

Since the appearance of Dr. Landmann's study of Euphuism, it has become a commonplace of English text-books to point to the Spaniard Guevara as the

[1] II. 133 (*v.* Textual Notes).

[2] Cp. I. 36.

[3] Pettie's animal-references are to ape, ass, buck, bull, camelion, cat, caterpillar, chick, cocatrice, cock, colt, coney, cow, crow, deer, doe, dog, doves, ewe, falcon, fly, fox, gerfalcon, gerkin, goshawk, greyhound, hare, hawk, horse, hound, humble-bee, kite, lamb, lanar, lanaret, lark, lions, mare, mastiff, moth, mouse, musket, ox, panther, partridge, ram, serpents, sheep, snake, spaniel, sparrow-hawk, spider, stork, swallow, swan, tassel-gentle, tiger, tossell, wolf, viper.

direct model of Lyly's style, and more especially to Sir Thomas North's translation, from the French, of Guevara's "*Marco Aurelio*," with the title of "*The Diall of Princes*," 1557. True, many of the devices of Lyly and Pettie may be found in Guevara, but Pettie (with whom one must deal in the first instance), so far as style is concerned, probably owed little to Sir Thomas North or his original, though both he and Lyly were indebted to "*The Diall of Princes*" in respect of subject-matter. Pettie's style was rather the direct outcome of the effort seen in many directions at the period of the Revival of Learning "to hear finer speech than the language will allow, to eat finer bread than is made of wheat, to wear finer cloth than is wrought of wool."

The Sources of 'A Petite Pallace.'—Ten years before the appearance in 1576 of "*A Petite Pallace of Pettie his Pleasure*," there was published the great storehouse of translated Italian and French stories, Paynter's "*Palace of Pleasure*." With this work Pettie was intimately acquainted; and though the title of his book may not have been chosen by himself, it very happily indicates Pettie's debt to his greater predecessor. There are allusions throughout

"*A Petite Pallace*" to Paynter's stories, and especially to those derived from Boccaccio and Bandello: *e.g.* "Titus and Gisippus," "Zilia and Virle," "King Edward and the Duchess of Salisbury," "The Duchess of Savoy," "Romeo and Juliet," "Florinda and Amadour," "Adalesia and Alerane," "Faustina," "Blanche Maria," "Angelica."[1]

Ovid, more particularly the *Metamorphoses*, perhaps in Golding's rendering, supplied many references to be found in Pettie's pages.[2]

The twelve stories in "*A Petite Pallace*" tell of "Synorix and Camma," "Tereus and Progne," "Germanicus and Agrippina," "Amphiaraus and Eriphyle," "Icilius and Virginia," "Admetus and Alcestis," "Scylla and Minos," "Curiatius and Horatia," "Cephalus and Procris," "Minos and Pasiphae," "Pygmalion," and "Saint Alexius." Of

[1] Cp. Dr. Emil Koeppel, *Studien zur Geschichte der Italienischen Novelle in der Englischen Litteratur des Sechzehnten Jahrhunderts*, 1892. Dr. Koeppel points out Pettie's debt to Paynter, referring to the source in each of the instances noted above, and also indicates Greene's debt to Pettie.

[2] The spelling of some proper names, *e.g.* Ceny, Penthey, Singer, etc., reminds one of Golding's forms. Occasionally Pettie's diction recalls Golding. (Cp. *Shakespeare's Ovid, being Arthur Golding's translation of the Metamorphoses*; at the De La More Press, 1904.)

these twelve, with the exception of the last, all were well-known classical tales; and the novelty lay in Pettie's method of dealing with the subjects, treating the love-stories in a romantic manner, and suggesting that though the stories were old, the names were mere disguises for modern lovers. Accordingly he takes liberties with his plots; a good instance has been noted in the case of the story of Eriphyle and her widowhood.

The story of "Synorix and Camma"[2] is found in "*The Diall of Princes*," but it was evidently popular in Elizabethan times. There was a ballad on the theme as early as 1569. It is found in Hoby's "*Courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio*," 1561. Dr. Koeppel is inclined to point to an Italian origin for Pettie's version, but this is by no means clear. The story is treated in Pettie's characteristic manner; he was no doubt familiar with it from various sources.

From "the Legends of the Saints" Pettie drew the last story: the story of St. Alexius was widely spread in England from mediæval times.

[1] Cp. Koeppel.

[2] Tennyson used this story for *The Cup*: he derived it from Plutarch, *De Mulier. Virt.* He first read of the story in Lecky's *History of European Morals* (cp. *Memoir*).

The author of the book.—Anthony à Wood has given us an excellent account of George Pettie, who was uncle to Wood's mother "Maria la Petite." All we know of the author is based on Wood's statement :—

"George Pettie a younger son of John le Petite or Pettie of Tetsworth and Stoke-Talmach in Oxfordshire, esq. was born in that country, and at about 16 years of age, anno 1564, was a scholar or student of Christ Church under Mr. Thomas Barnard canon thereof, and took one degree in arts as a member of that house in the latter end of the year 1568. Soon after he left the university, travelled beyond the seas, and at length became excellent for his passionate penning of amorous stories, equal for poetical invention with his dear friend William Gager, and as much commended for his neat stile as any of his time. He hath written a book, entituled, 'A Petite Palace of Pettie his Pleasure, containing many pretty stories in comely colours and most delightful discourses,' written in imitation of a book endited, *The Palace of pleasure beautified, adorned and well furnished with pleasant histories and excellent novels, etc.*, written by Will. Painter, clerk of the ordnance and armory within the Tower of London. The aforesaid *Petite Palace* I

have in my study,[1] and for the respect I bear to the name of the author (he having been uncle to my mother Maria la Petite) I will keep it; but 'tis so far now from being excellent or fine, that it is more fit to be read by a schoolboy, or rustical amoretto, than by a gent. of mode or language. The said Pettie translated from French into English (with a preface of his own put to it) *The Civil Conversation* of M. Stephen Guazzo, in 4 books; written originally in the Italian tongue, which I have also. Three of the said books were translated by the said Pettie, the fourth was begun by him, but finished by Bartholomew Young of the Middle-Temple, gentleman, being the same Bartholomew, as I think, who lived afterwards at Ashhurst in Kent, and died there in 1621.

"What other matters G. Pettie hath written, or translated, I cannot tell, nor do I know any thing material of him besides, only that he died in the prime of his years at Plymouth in Devonshire (being then a captain and a man of note) about the latter end of July in fifteen hundred eighty and nine, and was buried, as I have been told, in the great church there. The lands which he had by his father's gift in Aston-Rowant in Kingston in the parish thereof,

[1] Still among Wood's books at Oxford.

and at Tetsworth in Oxfordshire, he gave to his brother Christopher Pettie."[1]

Guazzo's 'Civil Conversation.'—Pettie must have taken in hand the translation of Guazzo very soon after he had finished "*A Petite Pallace*"; under date November 11, 1579, the book is entered in the Stationers' Registers, and on February 27, 1580–1, Richard Watkins obtained a licence for the publication. The Preface is dated February 6, 1581, from Pettie's lodging near St. Paul's, London, and is addressed to the Lady Norrice, wife of Sir Henry Norrice (Norris), of Rycote :—"You may compare with Olympias for her Alexander, with Hecuba for her Hector, with Thetis for her Achilles. And if you be askt where your jewels are, you may with Cornelia point to your children, you may point to that rare iewell which you have continuallie about you, who both in vertue and beautie excelleth the richest Diamond, and the most precious pearl that is."[2]

[1] *Athenæ Oxonienses*, by Anthony à Wood, M.A. A new edition, with additions and a continuation by Philip Bliss, I. 552.

[2] The 1581 edition is extremely rare. Wood knew only of the 1586 edition. Hunter (*Chorus Vatum*, Add. MSS. 24488) gives some account of this first edition. The passages quoted above are from the British Museum copy of 1586.

A second edition by Thomas East was issued in 1586, and in this edition was added a fourth book of Guazzo, begun by Pettie, but completed by Bartholomew Young.

Pettie's translation of Guazzo must have been widely read: recently an interesting and fairly successful attempt has been made to place it "among the books of Shakespeare's library," and to indicate Shakespeare's debt thereto in many famous passages.[1]

Pettie's defence of 'A Petite Pallace.'—'The Preface to the Readers' of "*The Civile Conversation*" deserves to be reproduced, or at all events that part of it which is Pettie's defence of English; it bears, in an interesting way, on Pettie's previous work:—

"Hauing (gentle Readers) by reason of a trifling worke of mine, (which, by reason of the lightnes of it, or at least of the keeper of it, flew abroade before I knew of it) alreadie won such fame, as hee which fired the Temple of Diana, I thought it stood me vpon, to purchase to my selfe some better fame by some better worke, and to counteruaile my former vanitie, with some formall grauitie. And though I

[1] Cp. article by Sir E. Sullivan, *Nineteenth Century*, 1904.

know all fame to be dangerous, for that if it be good, enuie followeth it, and if it be ill, shame accompanieth it : yet, seeing report once spread, cannot be reuoked, and hauing alreadie past the pikes in a daungerous conflict, without wound of honour (such was your curtesie) I doubt not nowe but to escape a few stragling shot in a light skirmish, without so much as hearing the discharge of their peeces : for the men which will assaile mee, are in deede rather to be counted friendlie foes, than deadlie enimies, as those who will neither mislike with mee, nor with the matter which I shall present vnto them, but tendering, as it were, my credit, thinke it not conuenient that such as I am (whose profession should chiefelie bee armes) should either spend the time in writing of Bookes, or publish them being written. Those which mislike studie or learning in Gentlemen, are some fresh water souldiers, who think that in warre it is the bodie which onlie must beare the brunt of all, not knowing that the bodie is ruled by the mind, and that in all doubtfull and dangerous matters, it is the mind onelie which is the man : but hauing shewed else where how necessarie learning is for souldiers, I adde onelie, that if we in England shall frame our selues onelie for warre, if wee bee not verie well

oiled, we shall hardlie keepe our selues from rusting, with such long continuance of peace, it hath pleased God to blesse vs. Those which mislike that a Gentleman should publish the fruits of his learning, are some curious Gentlemen, who thinke it most commendable in a Gentleman, to cloake his art and skill in euerie thing, and to seeme to doe all things of his owne mother wit as it were : not considering how we deserue no praise for that, which God or nature hath bestowed vpon vs, but onelie for that, which we purchase by our owne industrie : and if you shall chance to enter into reasoning with them, they will at the second word make protestation that they are no schollers : wheras notwithstanding they haue spent all their time in studie.

There are some others yet who will set light by my labours, because I write in English ; and those are some nice Trauailours, who retourne home with such queasie stomacks, that nothing will downe with them but French, Italian, or Spanish, and though a worke bee but meanelie written in one of those tongues, and finelie translated into our Language, yet they will not sticke farre to preferre the Originall before the Translation : the cause is partlie, for that they cannot so soone espie faultes in a forraine

Tongue as in their owne, which maketh them thinke that to bee currant, which is but course, and partlie for that straunge thinges doe more delight them, than that which they are dailie vsed to: but they consider not the profit which commeth by reading things in theyr owne Tongue, whereby they shall be able to conceiue the matter much sooner, and beare it awaie farre better, than if they reade it in a straunge Tongue, whereby also they shall be inabled to speake, to discourse, to write, to indite, properlie, fitlie, finelie, and wiselie, but the woorst is they thinke that impossible to be done in our Tongue: for they count it barren, they count it barbarous, they count it vnworthie to be accounted of: and, which is worse, as I my selfe haue heard some of them, they report abroade, that our Countrie is barbarous, our manners rude, and our people vnciuile: and when I haue stood with them in the comparison betweene other Countries and ours, and pointed with my finger to many grose abuses, vsed in the places where we haue bene, when by no reason they haue bene able to defend them, they haue shronke in their necke, and tolde me that it was the fashion of the Countrie: not considering that the manners and fashions of each Countrie, are the onelie things that

make it counted barbarous or ciuile, good or bad. But for our Countrie, I am perswaded that those which know it, and loue it, will report it for the ciuilest Countrie in the world : and if it be thought to be otherwise by strangers, the dis-orders of those trauailers abroade, are the chiefe cause of it. And to speake but of the lightest, their enuying one another, their deprauing one another, their flouting one another, their falling out one with another, their fighting one with another in the open streete (as with blushing I haue often beheld in Paris), their contemning of their Countrie fashion, their Apish imitation of euerie outlandish Asse in their iestures, behauiour, and apparell, are the onelie causes that make strangers count our Countrie and our people barbarous : for at home it is well knowen that we liue in lawes as orderlie, in manners as decentlie, in apparell as comelie, in diet as delicatelie, in lodging as curiouslie, in buildings as sumptuously, in all things as abundantlie, and euerie waie as ciuillie, as anie Nation vnder Heauen. For the barbarousnesse of our tongue, I must likewise saie that it is much the worse for them, and some such curious fellowes as they are : who if one chance to deriue anie word from the Latine, which is insolent to their eares (as

perchance they will take that phrase to be) they forthwith make a iest at it, and tearme it an Inkhorne tearme. And though for my part I vse those wordes as little as anie, yet I know no reason why I should not vse them, and I finde it a fault in my selfe that I doe not vse them : for it is in deed the readie waie to inrich our tongue, and make it copious, and it is the waie which all tongues haue taken to inrich themselues. For take the Latine wordes from the Spanish tongue, and it shall bee as barren as most part of their Countrie : take them from the Italian, and you take away in a manner the whole tongue : take them from the French, and you marre the grace of it : yea, take from the Latine it selfe the words deriued from the Greeke, and it shall not be so flowing and flourishing as it is. Wherfore I meruaile how our English tongue hath crackt its credit, that it may not borrow of the Latine as wel as other tongues, and if it haue broken, it is but of late ; for it is not vnknowen to all men, how many wordes we haue fetcht from thence within these few yeeres, which if they should be all counted inkpot tearmes, I know not how we should speak anie thing without blacking our mouths with inke : for what word can be more plain than this word *plaine* and yet what

can come more neere to the Latine? What more manifest than *manifest?* and yet in a manner Latine. What more commune than *rare*, or lesse rare than *commune* and yet both of them comming of the Latine? But you will saie, long vse hath made these wordes currant: and why may not vse doe as much for these wordes which we shall now deriue? Why should not we doe as much for the posteritie, as we haue receiued of the antiquitie? and yet if a thing be of it selfe ill, I see not how the oldnesse of it can make it good, and if it be of it selfe good, I see not how the newnesse of it can make it naught: wherevpon I infer, that those wordes which your selues confesse by vse to be made good, are good the first time they are vttered, and therefore not to be iested at, not to be misliked. But how hardlie so euer you deale with your tongue, how barbarous so euer you count it, how little so euer you esteeme it, I durst my selfe vndertake (if I were furnished with learning otherwise) to write in it as copiouslie for varietie, as compendiously for breuitie, as choicely for words, as pithilie for sentences, as pleasantlie for figures, and euerie waie as eloquentlie, as anie writer should do in anie vulgar tongue whatsoeuer. Thus hauing (as I hope) satisfied my

curious enimies, I am to craue the good will of my curteous friends, desiring you (gentle Reader) to accept in good part these my labours, which if they shall like you, I shall count my gaine great, if not, yet must I needs count my losse but light, in that the doing of it kept me from idlenesse, a thing so dangerous to young Gentlemen, that I wish you all, aboue all things, to auoide it. And so fare you well. *From my lodging neere Paules.*"

Editions of 'A Petite Pallace.'—Pettie's "*Petite Pallace*" was licensed for press to Richard Watkins on August 6, 1576. The first edition appeared soon after. The preliminary matter throws light on the method of publication, and the title of the book. R. B., to whom Pettie addressed a prefatory letter, are possibly the reversed initials of Barnaby Rich. Hazlitt (in *Bibliography of Old English Literature*) enumerates six editions between 1576 and 1613. In the British Museum are four editions, three undated, but attributed to 1576, 1586 (?), 1590 (?), and a fourth edition belonging to the year 1608. The first-named issue has been used as the basis of the present edition, and the other texts have been collated; in the textual notes they are represented respectively by the letters A., B., C., D. The

spelling has been modernized, but not aggressively so; and this especially as regards Proper Names, where some of Pettie's forms have been kept. In the Index of Proper Names (at the end of Vol. II) the correct forms in most instances are placed in brackets. The Reader should refer also to the Textual Notes.[1] The wording of the title-pages is the same in each :

"A petite Pallace,
of Pettie his pleasure :
contaynyng many pretie Hystories
by him set foorth in comely colours,
and most delightfully dis-
coursed.

Omne tulit punctum,
qui miscuit vtile dulci."

I. G.

[1] The references to Proper Names other than those to be found in Paynter's *Palace* (*cp. supra*) are fairly direct. "*Thais*" and "*Phaedria*" (II. 22), as Mr. McKerrow has kindly pointed out, are from Terence's *Eunuchus* (cp. I. i.) ; "*Dercyllidas*" is from Plutarch.

SPECIMEN PROVERBS AND SAYINGS, RACY PHRASES, AND COMPARISONS.

She went away with a flea in her ear, I. 31.

The sea hath fish for every man, I. 33.

There is no smoke but where there is some fire, I. 37.

Fortune ever favoureth the valiant, I. 79.

A hard pennyworth, I. 96.

Put finger in the eye, I. 130.

The virtue of necessity, I. 131.

One swallow makes not summer, I. 138.

Two wits are better than one, I. 147.

It is too late to shut the stable door when the steed is stolen, I. 176.

Grievous wounds must have smarting plasters, II. 23.

Gorged hawks will stoop to no lure, II. 34.

Many things happen between the cup and the lip, II. 44.

Man purposeth and God disposeth, II. 44, 128.

That which is bred in the bone, will not out of the flesh, II. 85.

The contented mind is the only riches, the only quietness, the only happiness, II. 87.

Strike while the iron is hot, II. 97.

Set a beggar on horseback and he will never alight, II. 100.

To make the reckoning without the host, is the way soon to be overshot in the shot, II. 108.

All is not gold which glisteneth, II. 132.

Out of God's blessing into a warm sun, II. 146.

Nothing venture, nothing have, I. 120.

He which toucheth pitch shall be defiled therewith, II. 127.

For every pint of honey, we shall taste a gallon of gall, II. 120.

Under most green grass lie most great snakes,
and under enticing baits entangling hooks, II. 3.

Sins oft assayed, are thought to be no sin :
So sin doth soil the soul it sinketh in, I. 8, 166.

We see sleeping that which we wish for waking, I. 145.

White silver is wrought in black pitch, I. 142.

Every dram of delight has a pound of spite,
and every inch of joy an ell of annoy, I. 141.

One must as well love to live as live to love, I. 133.

The parish priest forgetteth that ever he was clerk, I. 124.

The grass had been cut from under his feet, I. 121.

Freshest colours soonest fade,
and ripest fruit are rifest rotten, I. 104.

To promise golden hills, and perform dirty dales, I. 75.

There is no cloth so fine but moths will eat it,
no iron so hard but rust will fret it,
no wood so sound but worms will putrify it,
no metal so coarse but fire will purify it; II. 55.

In fair painted pots poison oft is put,
and in goodly sumptuous sepulchres rotten bones are rife;
so fairest words are ever fullest of falsehood, II. 80.

The more hard the fight is, the more haughty is the conquest,
and the more doubtful the battle, the more doughty the victory, I. 25.

As a hawk the higher pitch she flieth from the ground with the more force she stoopeth down upon her prey, and can the more easily command it,
or as a stroke or blow the higher it is lifted, the heavier it alights,
so God's vengeance the longer it is deferred the more it is to be feared, I. 29.

Like as streams the more ye stop them, the higher they flow,

and trees the more ye lop them the greater they grow,

or as spices the more they are beaten the sweeter scent they send forth,

or as the herb camomile the more it is trodden down the more it spreadeth abroad,

so virtue and honesty the more it is spited, the more it sprouteth and springeth, I. 36.

How much weaker (women's) bodies are than men's, so much the more strength and virtue is contained in their minds, II. 160.

The greatest clerks are not the wisest men, II. 149.

Fine marble needeth no painting, that is needful only for ragged walls, II. 163.

Every excess is turned into vice,

there is nothing so good, but by ill-using may be made naught, II. 138.

The canker commonly breedeth in the fairest rose, I. 28.

From most sharp thorns, to wit the rose tree, spring most sweet flowers, I. 120.

As the haughty hawk will not prey on carrion, so neither will courtly silks practise country flutes, I. 25.

There only grafts of grief must needs grow, where such raw conceit doth set, and such rash consent doth sow, I. 122.

Though the entry which leadeth to the lodging of love seem easy, and the porch paradise unto him, yet shall he find the hall a hell, and the whole house a hateful prison and a place of bondage, II. 120.

The she-wolf always chooseth that wolf for her make who is made most lean and foul by following her, I. 19.

When hope and hap, when health and wealth, are highest, then woe and wrack, disease and death, are nighest, II. 44.

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TO THE GENTLE GENTLEWOMEN READERS

Gentle Readers, whom by my will I would have only gentlewomen, and therefore to you I direct my words. May it please you to understand, that the great desire I have to procure your delight hath caused me somewhat to transgress the bounds of faithful friendship: for having with great earnestness obtained of my very friend Master George Pettie the copy of certain Histories by himself, upon his own and certain of his friends' private occasions drawn into discourses, I saw such witty and pithy pleasantness contained in them, that I thought I could not any way do greater pleasure or better service to your noble sex, than to publish them in print, to your common profit and pleasure. And though I am sure hereby to incur his displeasure, for that he willed me in any wise to keep them secret, yet if it please you thankfully to accept my good-will, I force the less of his ill-will. For to speak my fancy without feigning, I care not to displease twenty men to please one

woman ; for the friendship amongst men is to be counted but cold kindness, in respect of the fervent affections between men and women : and our nature is rather to dote of women, than to love men. And yet it lieth in your powers so to think of his doings, and to yield him such courteous consideration for the same, that he shall have more cause to thank me than think ill of my faithless dealing towards him. Which if your courtesies shall perform, you shall increase my duty towards you, and his good-will towards me : you shall make me shew my will and him his skill another time to pleasure you ; you shall bind both of us to remain ready at your commandments. For mine own part, I can challenge no part of praise or thanks for this work, for that I have taken no pains therein, by adding argument, note, or any thing, but even have set them forth as they were sent me ; only I have christened them with the name of a Pallace of Pleasure. I dare not compare this work with the former Pallaces of Pleasure, because comparisons are odious, and because they contain histories, translated out of grave authors and learned writers ; and this containeth discourses, devised by a green youthful capacity, and reported in a manner extempore, as I myself for divers of them

am able to testify. I dare not commend them, because I am partial; I dare dedicate them to you, Gentlewomen, because you are courteous. And that you may the better understand the drift of these devices, I have caused the letter also which my friend sent me with this work to be set down to your sight. Thus commending mine own faithless enterprise, and my friend's fruitful labour and learning, to your courteous protection, I wish you all beauty with bounty, and comeliness with courtesy, from my lodging in Fleet Street.

Yours readily to command,

R. B.

THE LETTER OF G. P. TO R. B. CONCERNING THIS WORK

Forced by your earnest importunity, and furthered by mine own idle opportunity, I have set down in writing, and according to your request sent unto you, certain of those tragical trifles, which you have heard me in sundry companies at sundry times report, and so near as I could I have written them word for word as I then told them ; but if any of them seem better unto you now than they did then, you must attribute it to my lisping lips, which perchance did somewhat disgrace the grace of them ; and if any seem worse now than then, you must impute it to this, that perchance there was then some Pallas in place which furthered my invention. For I am in that point of Ovid his opinion, that, *Si cupiat sponte disertus erit ;* but whether they seem unto you good or ill, I trust you will take them as a token of good-will, and that is the only commodity I look to reap by them. I pray you only to use them to your own private pleasure, and not to impart them to

other, perchance to my prejudice, for that divers discourses touch nearly divers of my near friends; but the best is, they are so darkly figured forth, that only they whom they touch, can understand whom they touch; yet to avoid all captious constructions, I pray you in any wise let them be an object only for your own eyes. If this mislike you in my discourses that I make Camma use the example of the Countess of Salisbury, the Duchess of Savoy, and such who were of far later years, then the ancient Camma is with the like in divers other of the stories: you must consider that my Camma is of fresher memory than any of them, and I think in your judgment, of fresher hue than the fairest of them. Likewise, if you like not of some words and phrases used contrary to their common custom, you must think, that seeing we allow of new fashions in cutting of beards, in long-waisted doublets, in little short hose, in great caps, in low hats, and almost in all things, it is as much reason we should allow of new fashions in phrases and words. But these faults, or whatsoever else, I care not to excuse unto you, who are the only cause I committed them, by your earnest desire to have me set down these trifles in writing. And as my words hitherto have tended

to this end, that you should take these trifles well, so now I am to exhort you that you will use them well : that with the spider you suck not out poison out of them, that by some light example you be not the sooner incited to lightness. For believe me (I speak it friendly, therefore take it friendly) I think it more needful to send you a bridle than a spur that way. And if my example may be a bridle to restrain you from vanity, do but imitate me hereafter ; or if my counsel may contain you in continency, do but follow this advice : if you be free, that you come not into bond ; if you be bound, *ut te redimas captum quam queas minimo :* for trust me, the broad blasphemy of Pygmalion, and the sudden apostacy, or rather right conversion, of Alexius, have settled me in this faith, that I think him *ter quaterque beatum qui a consortio mulierum se cohibere potest.* You marvel, I am sure, to hear these words of me, and that I should so soon turn my tippet and recant, who but yesterday, as it were, entered into heresy. But believe me, my B., *nunquam nimis cito est ad bonos mores via. Qui non est hodie, cras minus aptus erit.*

Principiis obsta, sero medicina paratur,
Cum mala per longas convaluere moras.

Errare humanum est ; in errore perseverare, belluinum.

Sins oft assayed, are thought to be no sin:
So sin doth soil the soul it sinketh in.

Thus have I sent you in that book some fruits of my former folly, and in this letter the profession of my present faith, desiring you to use the one to your honest pleasure, and to follow the other to your goodly profit. I mean, God willing, the next spring to go on pilgrimage with Alexius, and if you were so devoutly disposed, I should think myself most happy to have such a companion. From my lodging in Holborn this 12 of July.

G. P.

Tuus semper, aut suus nunquam.
Omnia in mundo, immunda.

THE PRINTER TO ALL READERS OF THIS BOOK

Having sometime in my custody this book in written hand, which by means of a special friend of mine was committed unto me, I was by him oftsoons earnestly solicited to publish the same in print. Who being such an one whose request I would not willingly deny, I fell to perusing the work, and perceived at the first by the Author's letter, that he was not willing to have it common, as thinking certain points in it to be too wanton to be wrought by that wit which by this work appeared to be in him, which as I conjecture, moved him to write to his friend to keep it private to his own use, as may appear by his friend's Epistle, and his Letter going before. Nevertheless, to accomplish the desire of the one, and not to incur the displeasure of the other, as also to pleasure you, the friendly Readers hereof, I have put the same in print, using my discretion in omitting such matter as in the Author's judgment might seem offensive, and yet I trust not leaving

imperfections in the discourse, whereof if I have not gelded too much, I think I have deserved the less blame. And considering that in matters of pleasure, the Printer may sooner offend in printing too much, than in publishing too little, I have applied myself to the contrary, hoping that how much the less I have printed, reserving the discourse perfect, so much the less I shall be blamed for the deed. As for the Gentleman that wrote this work, and his friend that procured it to be published, as they are unknown to me both, so had I conference with neither, whereby the less I could use their advice in abridging anything, which may be some cause of the disgracing of that, which doubtless the Author had penned with great excellency, and eloquence. If herein, as I fear, I have offended, I am willing, being advertised thereof, to be reformed, craving pardon of him especially, and of all other friendly Readers, for the oversights whatsoever herein committed: for whose pleasure and profit I have left undone, and done, whatsoever I have done in their behalf. I have also of myself added an argument to every history, that the effect of the discourse may be the more easily carried away.

Fare ye heartily well.

SINORIX AND CAMMA

SINORIX, chief governor of Sienna in Italy, glancing his eyes upon the glittering beauty of Camma, wife to Sinnatus, a gentleman of the same city, falleth into extreme love with her, and assayeth sundry ways to win her good-will; but perceiving his practises to take no wished effect, and supposing the husband's life to hinder his love, causeth him to be murdered by a ruffian. Camma, to the intent she might be revenged upon the chief conspirator, in granting him marriage, despatcheth herself in drinking to him, and him in pledging her, in a draught of poison, which she had prepared for that purpose.

As amongst all the bonds of benevolence and good-will there is none more honourable, ancient, or honest than marriage, so in my fancy there is none that doth more firmly fasten, and inseparably unite us together than the same estate doth, or wherein the fruits of true friendship do more plenteously appear. In the

father is a certain severe love and careful good-will towards the child ; the child beareth a fearful affection and awful obedience towards the father ; the master hath an imperious regard of the servant, the servant a servile care of the master. The friendship amongst men is grounded upon no law, and dissolved upon every light occasion : the good-will of kinsfolk is commonly cold, as much of custom as of devotion : but in this stately state of matrimony, there is nothing fearful, nothing feigned, all things are done faithfully without doubting, truly without doubting, willingly without constraint, joyfully without complaint : yea, there is such a general consent and mutual agreement between the man and wife, that they both wish and will, covet and crave one thing. And as a scion grafted in a strange stalk, their natures being united by growth they become one, and together bear one fruit : so the love of the wife planted in the breast of her husband, their hearts by continuance of love become one, one sense and one soul serveth them both. And as the scion severed from the stock withereth away, if it be not grafted in some other, so a loving wife separated from the society of her husband, withereth away in woe, and leadeth a life no less pleasant than death, as the sequel of this history shall show, where-

in you shall see a marvellous mirror of blessed matrimony, and a terrible type of beastly tyranny.

In the city Sienna was a married couple, the husband named Sinnatus, the wife called Camma, who as they were by estate worshipful, by virtue honourable, and by goodness gracious, so were they in riches fortunate, in children fruitful, in friends flourishing, and in love so loyal each to other, that they long time led a loving and quiet life together; but either fortune envying their prosperity, or the devil displeased with their virtuous life, or God disposed to try their truth, and make them patterns to their posterity, converted this happy life to a heavy estate, and raised up one Sinorix to raze and break down the firm foundation of their faithful building and biding together. For this Sinorix, glancing his gazing eyes on the blazing beauty of Camma, received so deep an impression of her perfection in his heart, that immediately he fixed his fancy upon her comely corps. And being the chief ruler of the city, he persuaded himself that there was none in the city so stout but would stoop to his lure, nor none so fair but would fain employ themselves to pleasure him; but on the other side, the renowned virtue of Camma came to his mind, which persuaded

an impossibility to his purpose: and floating thus between hope and despair he entered into these terms:—

"O miserable wretch that I am, to whom shall I present my complaints! Is it the heavenly powers and gods of love that have deprived me of my senses, and showed their divine working in me, or is it the hellish hags and spirits of spite that have bereaved me of reason, and executed their cruelty on me: is it love that leadeth me to this lust, or is it hate that haleth me to this hurt and mischief? No, no; the gods guide us to goodness; the furies of hell it is that force us to filthiness: neither doth it any way deserve the name of love, which bringeth such torment to my troubled mind, that all the devils in the world could not do the like. But see my rashness; why am I so blindly bold, beastly to blaspheme against that which proceeds altogether of nature, which nature hath imparted to all men, and which I ought to follow without repining or resisting? For so long as I follow nature as my guide I cannot do amiss; seeing nature hath taught us to love, why should I not rather prove her precepts, than reprove that which by nature's lore is allowed? And touching torment of mind, or either inconvenience that it bringeth, is it at all able to

impair the least joy which I shall enjoy in embracing my Camma ? Is it not meet that he which would reap should sow, he that would gather fruit should plant trees, he that would reach the sweet rose should now and then be scratched with the sharp briars ? I mean it is meet if I purpose to possess so proper a piece as Camma is, that I should fly no labour or refuse any peril in the pursuit thereof." And hereupon he determined to follow the fury of his fancy, what pangs or perils soever he incurred thereby. And having resolved many ways in his mind how he might aspire to his purpose, at length he resolved upon this, to institute a sumptuous banquet, whereto he invited the chief of the city, among whom Sinnatus and his wife Camma were not forgotten, to wit the only authors of the feast. Now for the more royal receiving of his guests he met them at the entry into his palace, and gave them this greeting :—

" Fair ladies, as I am right joyful of your presence, so am I no less sorrowful for the pains which you have taken in undertaking so great a journey this dark and misty evening, for the which I must account myself so much the more beholden to you by how much greater your labour was in coming, and by how much less your cheer shall be able to countervail it now you

are come." And taking Camma by the hand, he said softly unto her :—"I pity the pains of these gentlewomen the less for that you were in their company, whose piercing eyes as celestial stars or heavenly lamps might serve for lights in the dark, whose sweet face might perfume the air from all noisome smells which might annoy them, and by beholding your lovely looks and perfect shape they might take such delight, that the weariness of the way could nothing molest or grieve them."

Camma, hearing herself so greatly praised of so great a personage as he was, could not keep the roseal red out of her alabaster cheeks, and thinking no such serpentine malice to lie hid under these merry and sugared words, she gave him this courteous answer :—

"If, sir, the company had made no better provision for lights and other things necessary than such as you speak of, they might soon have slipped into the mire ; but as I perceive by your words you are disposed to jest and be merry, so I am content for this once to be made the instrument thereof, thereby to ease some part of the pains which you are like to take in receiving such troublesome guests as we are ; and for our cheer you need take no thought, for it shall be so

much too good for us, by how much less we have deserved any at all at your hands."

After this amorous encounter, he caused the company to sit down to the banquet, and so disposed the matter, that Camma sat right over at the table against him, whereby he freely fed his eyes on that meat which converted rather to nourishment of sickness, than to wholesome humors of health. For as the finest meats that be, eaten by one in extremity of sickness, resolve not to pure blood to strengthen the body, but to waterish humors to feed the fever and disease, so though her face and looks were fine and sweet, and brought delight to all the beholders else, yet to him they brought only torment and trouble of mind ; and notwithstanding he perceived her beauty to breed his bane, and her looks to procure the loss of his liberty, and that as the cocatrice by sight only slayeth, so she by courteous countenance only killed and wounded his heart, yet could he not refrain his eyes from beholding her, but according to the nature of the sickly patient, which chiefly desireth that which chiefly is forbidden him, he so incessantly threw his amorous glances towards her, that his eyes were altogether bleared with her beauty ; and she also at the length began to perceive his loving looks towards her, which

made her look pale in token of the little pleasure she took in his toys, and of the great fear she had lest some other should mark them, whereby her good name might come in question. The banquet being ended, every one prepared themselves to hear a stage play, which was then ready to be presented. But Sinorix being able to play but one part, which was of a poor passionate lover, determined to go forward with the tragedy already begun between Camma and him, and seeing her set out of the husband's sight, placed himself by her, and entered into reasoning with her, to this purpose :—" If, fair lady, this simple banquet had been so sweet and pleasant to your seemly self and the rest as your sight is delightful to me, I am persuaded you would not have changed your cheer for nectar and ambrosia, which the poets feigned to be the food of the gods : but seeing there was no cause of delight in the one, and the other containeth that in it which may content the gods themselves, I shall desire you in good part to accept the one, and courteously to account me worthy to enjoy the other. And though I have not heretofore by dutiful service manifested unto you the loyalty of my love, yet if my poor heart could signify unto you the assaults it hath suffered for your sake, I doubt not

but you would confess, that by force of love I had won you, and were worthy to wear you. For albeit by human laws your husband only have interest in you, yet by nature's laws, which being more ancient ought to be of more authority, he ought to enjoy you which joyeth most in you, which loveth you best and endureth most pain for your sake : and for proof of nature's laws, it may please you to consider the quality of the she-wolf who always chooseth that wolf for her make who is made most lean and foul by following her ; besides that, my title marcheth under the ensign of justice, which is a virtue giving to every one according to his desert, and that the desert of love is only love again, I know you are not to know ; for all the goods in the world are not able to requite goodwill, the one belonging to the mind, the others incident to the body ; but from the equity of my cause I appeal to your good grace and favour, and at the bar of your beauty I humbly hold up my hands, meaning to be tried by your courtesy and mine own loyalty, and minding to abide your sentence either of consent unto life, or of denial unto death." Camma hearing this discourse, soon looked red for shame, as soon pale for anger, neither would disdain let her make him answer, neither would her grief give her leave to hold

her peace, but standing a while in a maze between silence and saying, at length she brake off the one and burst out into the other in this sort :—

"If, sir, your banquet had been no better than this your talk is pleasant to me, I am persuaded the dishes would have been taken whole from the table without touching, but as the one was far better than the company deserved, so the other for a far worse woman might more fitly have served ; and if your sweet meat have such sour sauce, the next time you send for me, I will make you such answer as was made to Cratorus the Emperor by Diogenes when he sent for him to make his abode with him in his court, who answered he had rather be fed at Athens with salt, than live with him in all delicacy ; so for my part I promise you I had rather be fed at home with bread and water than pay so dearly for dainty dishes. Touching the pains you have endured for my sake, I take your words to be as false towards me, as you would make my faith towards my husband : but admit they were true, seeing I have not willingly been the cause of them, I count not myself bound in conscience to countervail them, only I am sorry they were not bestowed on some more worthy your estate and less worthy an honest name than myself, which being the

chief riches I have, I mean most diligently to keep. The interest which cavillingly you claim in me as it consisteth of false premises, so though the premises were true, yet the conclusion which you infer thereof followeth not necessarily. For were it so that your love were greater towards me than my husband's—which you cannot induce me to believe—yet seeing my husband by order of law hath first taken possession of me, your title succeeding his, your success and suit must needs be cold and naught : for as yourself say of laws, so of titles the first are ever of most force, and the most ancient of most authority. Your wolves' example, though it shew your foxy brain, yet doth it enforce no such proof to your purpose but that by my former reason it may be repelled, for that the wolf is free from the proper possession of any : but therein truly you observe decorum very duly in using the example of a beast in so beastly a cause, for like purpose, like proof; like man, like matter. Your manly marching under the ensign of justice, if reason be your captain-general to lead you, I doubt not but soon to turn to a retire ; for if it be good-will which you bear me, I must needs grant you duly deserve the like again : but when you are able to prove it good-will to deflower my chastity, to

bereave me of my good name, to despoil me of mine honour, to cause me to transgress the bounds of honesty, to infringe my faith towards my husband, to violate the sacred rites of matrimony, to pollute the temple of the Lord, with other innumerable enormities, when, I say, you are able to prove these to proceed of good-will, then will I willingly yield consent to your request. But see the unreasonableness of your suit; would you have me, in shewing courtesy towards you, commit cruelty towards myself? should I, in extending mercy to you, bring myself to misery? should I place you in pleasure, and displace myself of all joy? For what joy can a woman enjoy having lost her chastity, which ought to be the joy, jewel, and gem of all gentlewomen of my calling and countenance? Your appeal from your own cause to my courtesy bewrayeth the naughtiness thereof; for if it be not ill, why stick you not to it? if it be good, why appeal you from it; but seeing you have constituted me judge in this case, you know it is not a part of a judge to deal partially, or to respect the man more than the matter, or to tender more mine own case than your cause: therefore indifferently this sentence definitive I give: I condemn you henceforth to perpetual silence in this suit, and that you never

hereafter open your mouth herein, being a matter most unseemly for your honour, and most prejudicial to my honesty ; and in abiding this sentence, if you can be content with honest amity, for the courtesy which I have always found at your hands, and for the good-will which you pretend to bear me, I promise you, you shall enjoy the second place in my heart, and you shall find me friendly in all things, which either you with reason can ask, or I with honesty grant."

Sinorix, having heard this angel thus amiably pronouncing these words, was so wrapt in admiration of her wisdom, and ravished in contemplation of her beauty, that though she had not enjoined him to silence, yet had he not had a word to say : and lest his looks might bewray his love, and his countenance discover his case, he secretly and suddenly withdrew himself into his chamber, to study what face to set on the matter. And casting himself upon his bed, after he had dreamed awhile upon his doting devices, at length he awaked out of his wavering thoughts, and recovered the possession of his senses again : by which time the play was ended, and his guests ready to depart, whereupon he was driven to come forth of his chamber to take his leave of them ; and bidding

his mistress good-night, he gave her such a look, that his very eyes seemed to plead for pity, so that what his tongue durst not, his eyes did. His guests being gone, he disposed himself to rest, but love, which was then his good master, willed him otherwise to employ that night, which was in examining particularly every point of her answer. And though the first part seemed somewhat sharp and rigorous, and the second contained the confutation of his cause, yet the third and last part seemed to be mixed with mettle of more mild matter, which he repeated to himself a thousand times, and thereupon, as upon a firm foundation, determined to raise up his building again which the two former parts of her answer had utterly ransacked to the ground. But mistaking the nature of the ground whereon the foundation was laid, his building, as if it had been set in sands, soon came to ruin ; for by that promise of friendship, which she friendly made him, he sinisterly conceived hope of obtaining that which she neither with honour could promise, neither with honesty perform ; and feeding himself with that vain hope in great bravery, as in a manner assured of the victory, he wrote unto her to this effect :—

"Albeit, good mistress, you have enjoined my tongue

to silence, yet my hands are at liberty to bewray the secrets of my heart, and though you have taken my heart prisoner, yet my head hath free power to plead for release and relief. Neither would I you should count me in the number of those cowardly soldiers, which at the first canon that roareth, give over the siege of the city they assaulted; for I have been always settled in this opinion, that the more hard the fight is, the more haughty is the conquest, and the more doubtful the battle, the more doughty the victory. And as it is not the part of a politic captain to put himself in peril without hope of prey, or praise, so, to win the bulwarks of your breast, I count it a more rich booty than Cæsar had in ransacking so many cities, and a more rare praise than ever Alexander had in subduing so many nations. And though my presumption may seem great in practising one of so high a calling as your sweet self, yet seeing in all degrees of friendship equality is chiefly considered, I trust you will clear me of crime that way: neither would I you should think my flight so free to stoop at every state, for as the haughty hawk will not prey on carrion, so neither will courtly silks practise country flutes. But because I know that to be in you which both concerneth my

calling, and consenteth with my fancy, I have chosen you for the goddess of my devotions, humbly beseeching you with pity to hear the prayers, which I with pain pour forth before you, that it may not be said your name hath been called on in vain, whereby you may lose that honour, which others of duty, and I of devotion do unto you. The benefit which you bestow on me in granting me the second place in your heart, as I must acknowledge, though somewhat unthankfully, so must I crave a greater, though somewhat impudently: for seeing my whole heart and body are yours, methinks a piece of your heart is a poor piece of amends. Weigh the matter uprightly, consider my case courteously, and take compassion on me speedily. Yours altogether, Don Sinorix de Sienna."

Camma, having received and read this letter was assailed diversely, sometime with sorrow in thinking on the time she first saw him or he her, sometime with repentance of her former promise made him, sometime with pity on his part, sometime with piety on her own: but at length piety vanquished pity, and caused her to send this rough reply to his letter :—

"The little account you make of me and my goodwill, I perceive by the little care you have to satisfy

that which I gave you in charge; you would ill have done as the knight Virla did, who at the commandment of his lady Zilia, forbare the use of his tongue and remained dumb the term of three years; but as you subtly think to discharge yourself of my charge by writing and not speaking, so by writing I simply do you to understand, that from henceforth you look for no more at my hands than at a stranger's, I will not say an enemy's; for seeing my promise was but upon condition, the condition being broken, my promise is void. And seeing you have played the pelting merchant venturer, to hazard that good-will and credit you had with me to get more, the tempest of my just displeased mind hath driven your suit against the rough rocks of repulse, and you have made shipwreck of all: your courageous persisting in your purpose proveth you rather a desperate sot than a discreet soldier: for to hop against the hill, and strike against the stream, hath ever been counted extreme folly; your valiant venturing for a prey of value proceeds rather of covetousness than of courage, for the valiant soldier seeketh glory, not gain; but therein you may be more fitly resembled to the caterpillar which cleaveth only to good fruit, or to the moth which most of all eateth the best cloth,

or to the canker which commonly breedeth in the fairest rose, or to the wolf which by his will will kill the fattest sheep. The equality which you pretend to be between us is altogether unequal, for both you exceed me in degree, and I excel you in honesty, so that neither in calling nor quality is there any equality between us. Whereas you have chosen me for your goddess, I beseech you suffer me to remain an earthly creature, and serve you that God which can bridle your wanton desires, and give you grace to give your neighbours leave to live honestly by you, lest you take his name in vain, who will verily punish your vanity at the length, though for a time he suffer you to wallow in your wickedness. For it is the prudent policy of God to suffer the sinful long time to swim in their sin, to make their sinking more sorrowful, by their sudden shrinking from prosperity to adversity; for adversity is ever most bitter to him who hath long time lived in prosperity. Neither must you think that that which is deferred is taken away, for as yourself or any other that oweth money, though you defer your creditor for a time, yet you defraud him not altogether of his due, so though God take days with you for a time, yet assure yourself he will pay you truly at length, yea, and perchance

with large usury besides the due debt. For as a hawk the higher pitch she flieth from the ground with the more force she stoopeth down upon her prey and can the more easily command it, or as a stroke or blow the higher it is lifted the heavier it alights, so God's vengeance the longer it is deferred the more it is to be feared; and this good counsel take of me as the last benefit which you shall ever receive at my hands. Yours nothing at all, Constantia Camma."

Sinorix having seen this rigorous resolution of his mistress, went another way to work; he suborned an old woman of the city, well seen in soliciting such suits, to go unto her and to present her from him with many rich jewels, and which he willed her to tell, he would willingly bestow for one simple consent of her good-will. The old woman having done his shameful message without shame, said of herself in this sort:—

"Surely, Mistress Camma, if the experience which old years have given me, might crave credit for the counsel which I shall give you, I would not wish you to refuse the friendship of such a one as Sinorix is, who is able to fill your purse with pearls, and fulfill you with pleasure every day; neither is it wisdom for

you to spend your golden years but in golden pleasure, and not to be tied to one diet which bringeth satiety and loathsomeness, but to have choice of change which breedeth appetite and lustiness." The chaste ears of Camma, not able to endure this coarse discourse, she cut off her ghostly counsel with these cutting words :— "Gentlewoman, if you were endued with as many good conditions as you have lived years, you would never have undertaken so shameless a message ; and were it not more for reverence of your years than respect of your errand, I would make your filthy trade of life so famous, that you would ever hereafter be ashamed to show your face in any honest company. What ! do you think, though money can make you a bawd, that it can make me a harlot, and though you for gain fly no filthiness, that I for glory follow no faithfulness, either towards my spouse and husband, either towards my Lord and God ? Do you judge me so covetous of coin, or so prodigal of mine honour, that to get the one I will lose the other ? Or doth he that sent you think so abjectly of me, that gain may more prevail with me than good-will, money more than a man, coin more than courtesy, jewels more than gentleness, pearls more than perils and pains which he hath endured for my sake ? No, let him understand, if any-

thing could have caused me to swerve from my duty, love of lucre should not have allured me thereto, but as I am fully resolved faithfully to keep my vow and promise made to my husband, so I beseech him not to bestow any more labour in attempting that which he shall never attain unto : for before this my resolution shall be reversed, he shall see the dissolution of my body into dust. But if he will not thus give over his suit, he will cause me to make those privy to his dealing who will make him ashamed of it ; and for your part, you may pack you hence with this your trash and trumpery to those which measure their honour by the price of profit, and their glory by the guerdon of gain."

This honest woman being gone away with a flea in her ear, Camma began to think of the matter with advised deliberation, and entered into reasoning with herself in this sort :—

"What fearful folly is this in me to condemn the friendship of so great a lord as Sinorix is, whom the greatest lady in this land would willingly receive for husband, and yet I rigorously refuse for servant ? What is that honour whereon I stand so stiffly. Shall it not rather increase mine honour to have so honourable a servant ? And what is that chastity which I

seek so charily to keep. Do not some men say that women always live chastely enough, so that they live charily enough ; that is, so that they convey their matters so covertly that their doings be not commonly known, for otherwise to incontinency were added impudence ? Likewise, for a woman to enter into conversation with a rascal of no reputation, cannot but be a great blemish to the brightness of her name (for a foul adulterer is ever worse than the adultery itself). And it is a great sign she greatly loatheth her husband when she liketh one better, which is every way worse : but to have a friend of reservation whose very countenance may credit her and her husband, methinks can be no great dishonour to either the one or the other. What dishonour was it, I pray you, to Helen when she left her husband Menelaus and went with Paris to Troy ? Did not the whole glory of Greece to her great glory go in arms to fetch her again ? And if she had not been counted a piece of price, or if by the fact she had defaced her honour, is it to be thought the Grecians would have continued ten years in war continually to win her again ? But to leave honour and chastity, and come to commodity and safety, what do I know what perils will follow of this repulse ? Is it likely Sinorix will put up with

this reproach patiently? may I not justly look to have his love turned to hate, and that he will either by tyrannous means seek the subversion of my husband and his whole household, either by treacherous means work the overthrow of me and my good name? For the first, Edward, a king of England, may serve for an example, who when the Countess of Salisbury would not consent to content his incontinent desire, he so raged against her parents and friends, that the father was forced to persuade his own daughter to folly, and the mother as a bawd to prostitute her to the King's lust, and bring her to his privy chamber. For the second, the Earl of Sancalier may serve for testimony, who when the Duchess of Savoy would not yield to his lascivious lust, wrought such wiles, that she was condemned for adultery, and judged to suffer most shameful death by burning. Now to prevent either of these perils it lieth in my power; and seeing of evils the least is to be chosen, I think it better than to hazard life, living, or good name, to lose that which shall be no great loss to my husband or myself; for as the sun though it shine on us here in Italy, yet it giveth light likewise to those that are in England and other places, or as the sea hath fish for every man, or as one good dish of meat may well suffice two persons

though very hungry, so is there that in me wherewith Sinnatus may be satisfied and Sinorix sufficed. And this encourageth me hereto the rather, for that I see by experience in most of my neighbours, that those are ever most made of by their husbands, who that way deal most falsely with their husbands. Besides that, how openly soever they deal in these affairs, their husbands never hear of it ; and though they do hear of it, yet will they not hearken unto it ; and though they do in a manner see it, yet will they not believe it ; and though they do believe it, yet will they love them the better to have them leave it the sooner. Again, what know I whether my husband deal falsely with me and row in some other stream, which if it be so, I shall but save my soul in paying his debts, and exercise the virtue of justice in requiting like for like. And touching corrupting of my children's blood, I think it made more noble in participating with a blood more noble than my husband's is. But canst thou, harlot, call him husband, whom thou meanest so wickedly to betray ? Am I in my wits to use these witless words ? Is it my mouth that hath uttered this blasphemy, or was it the devil within me that delivered it forth ? No, if I were guilty but in thought hereto, I would restore the fault with criminal

penance ; yea, if I felt any part in me apt to any such evil, I would cut it off for fear of infecting the rest of the body. Good God, whither now is honour fled, which was ever wont to be the fairest flower in my garland ? Whither now is chastity chased, which hath been always the chiefest stay of my state ? Shall the sun of my shining light be now eclipsed with an act so filthy, that the very remembrance thereof is no less grievous than death ? Why, was Helen for all her heavenly hue any other accounted than a common harlot, and was it not only to be revenged on her and her champion Paris, that the Grecians continued their siege so long ? And touching the inconveniences I may incur by this refusal, is any evil worse than dishonesty ? Is there any thing to be fled more than offence ? Is not the loss of goods less than of one's good name ? Is not an honourable death to be preferred before an infamous life ? And touching the Countess before rehearsed, had she ever married with the King if she had not continued in her constancy to the end ? And for the Duchess of Savoy, what hurt sustained she by that false accusation ? Did it not make her glory and virtue show more splendently to the whole world ? Yes, no doubt of it ; for like as streams the more ye stop them the higher they flow,

and trees the more ye lop them the greater they grow, or as spices the more they are beaten the sweeter scent they send forth, or as the herb camomile the more it is trodden down the more it spreadeth abroad, so virtue and honesty the more it is spited the more it sprouteth and springeth ; for honour ever is the reward of virtue, and doth accompany it as duly as the shadow doth the body. And as the sun, though it be under a cloud, keepeth still his brightness though we see it not, so Virtue though it be dimmed with devilish devices, yet it keepeth her strength and power still, though to us it seem utterly to be extinguished, so that so long as I remain virtuous and honest, I need not care what man, malice, or the devil, can devise against me. No, no, dear children, you shall not by my means be suspected to be bastards, neither will I make thee, sweet husband, ashamed to show thy face amongst the best of them ; and I will let thee understand the villainy which that viper Sinorix endeavoureth to deal ! And shall I deal so fondly indeed ? Is not the repulse punishment enough, unless I bewray his doings to my husband, and so procure him further displeasure ? Yea, I might thereby be occasion to set them together by the ears, whereby it might fall out, as the event of battle is

always doubtful, that my husband might be hurt or slain, and then the common report would be (as the people are ever prone to speak the worst) that I being an ill woman had conspired his confusion and set Sinorix to slay him. And though no such thing chanced, as God forbid it should, yet this at least I should be sure to get by it, that my husband ever after would be jealous over me, and right careful would he be to keep that which he saw others so busily to seek. And such is the malice of men, perchance he would judge some light behaviour in me to be the cause that encouraged Sinorix to attempt my chastity. For men have this common opinion amongst them, that as there is no smoke but where there is some fire, so seldom is there any fervent love but where there hath been some kindness shewed to kindle one's desire. Moreover, this toy may take him in the head, that it is a practise between us two to prevent suspicion and cloak our love, and with the firm persuasion of my invincible chastity to lull him asleep in security, and then most to deceive him when he least suspecteth guile : and if at any time he hear of it by other, I may stop his mouth with this, that I myself told him of it, which if I had meant to deal falsely with him, I would not have done : yea, what

know I whether he will like the better or the worse of me for breeding such a bees'-nest in his brain: lastly, I should derogate much from mine own virtue, and in a manner accuse myself of proneness to fall that way, as though I were not strong enough to withstand his assaults without the assistance of my husband. Yes, God in whom I repose my trust, shall fortify me against the fury of my foes, and give me grace with wisdom to escape his wiles, with chariness to eschew his charms, and with piety to resist his pravity."

Now to return to Sinorix. So soon as that old Pandarina had related unto him at large the answer of his mistress, he fell from the place he sat flat upon the ground, and lay in a trance a great while, and now those sparks which before love had kindled in him, were with continual sighs so blown, as it were, with a pair of bellows, that they break forth into fiery flames, and that which before was fancy was now turned to fury: for being come to himself, or rather being quite past himself, with staring looks, with pale countenance, with fiery eyes, with gnashing teeth, with trembling tongue, in rage he roared forth these words :—

"And shall I thus be frustrate of my desire? Shall I with words and works, with prayers and presents,

pursue the good-will of a dainty disdaining dame, and receive but labour for my love, and grief for my good-will? But, ah! frantic fool, why do I in my rage, rage against her who is the most fair and courteous creature under heaven? No, it is that churl Sinnatus that soweth the seed of my sorrow, it is his severity towards her, that causeth her cruelty towards me; the fear she hath of him is the cause she dareth not take compassion on my passions; and shall he swim in bliss, and I lie drenched in deep despair? shall he be engorged with pleasure, and I pine away in pain? No, I will make him feel that once, which he maketh me feel a thousand times a day." And hereupon determined with himself by some means or other to procure the death of Sinnatus, thinking thereby the sooner to obtain his purpose of his wife. And calling unto him one of his swearing swash-buckler servants, he laid before him the platform of his purpose, and told him plainly if he would speedily despatch Sinnatus out of the way, he would give him a thousand crowns in his purse to keep him in another country. His servant, though altogether past grace, yet for fashion-sake began to advise his master more wisely, saying:—

"For mine own part it maketh no matter, for

another country is as good for me as this, and I count any place my country where I may live well and wealthily ; but for your part it behoveth you to look more warily to yourself, for that your love towards Camma is known to divers of this city ; by reason whereof, if I should commit any such act, it must needs be thought that you must needs be accessory thereto, which will turn, though not to your death, for that none hath authority above you to execute the rigour of the laws upon you, yet to your utter shame and reproach it cannot but convert."

"Tush," saith his master, "the case is light where counsel can take place : what talkest thou to me of shame, that am by injurious and spiteful dealing deprived the use of reason, and dispossessed of my wits and senses ? Neither am I the first that have played the like part ; did not David, the chosen servant of God, being blasted with the beauty of Bersabe, cause her husband Urias to be set in the forefront of the battle to be slain, which done he married his wife ? and why is it not lawful for me to do the like ? But I know the worst of it ; if thou wilt not take it upon thee, I will either do it myself, or get some other that shall."

The man seeing how his master was bent, both to

satisfy his mind, and to gain so good a sum of money, promised to perform his charge, which with opportunity of time and place he did. And seeing Sinnatus on a time—in ill time—passing through a blind lane of the city, he shrouded himself in a corner, and as he came by, shot him through with a pistol : which done he forthwith fled the country. Camma, hearing of the cruel murder of her husband, and by the circumstances knowing Sinorix to be the author thereof, tearing her hair, scratching her face, and beating her body against the ground, so soon as the flood of tears had flown so long that the fountain was dry, so that her speech might have passage, which, before, the tears stopped, she began to cry out in this careful manner :—

" O God, what injustice is this in thee, to suffer the earth remain polluted with the blood of innocents ? Didst thou curse Cain for killing his brother Abel, and wilt thou not crucify Sinorix for slaying Sinnatus ? Is thy heart now hardened that thou wilt not, or are thy hands now weakened that thou canst not, preserve thy servants from the flaws of Satan ? If there be no safety in innocence, wherein shall we repose ourselves ? If thou be not our protector, who shall defend us ? If the wicked vanquish the virtuous, who shall set forth thy honour and glory, or who will so much as

once call upon thy name? But what mean I, wretched wight, to exclaim against God as the author of my evil, whereas it is only I myself that am guilty of my husband's death? It is I that pampered up my beauty to make it glister in the sight of every gazing eye, in the thriftless thread whereof this tyrant was so entangled, that to unwind himself thereout he hath wrought all this mischief. It is I that would not detect his doings to my husband, whereby he might have prevented the peril which hung over his head. And seeing I have been the cause of his death, shall I, being a murderer, remain alive? Did Alcyone, seeing the dead carcase of her husband Ceyx cast on shore, willingly cast herself into the sea to accompany his death? And shall I see my sweet Sinnatus slain, and not drink of the same cup? Did true Thisbe gore her gorgeous body with the same sword wherewith princely Pyramus had pricked himself to the heart; and are not my hands strong enough to do the like? Did Julietta die upon the corpse of her Romeo, and shall my body remain on earth, Sinnatus being buried? No, gentle death! come with thy direful dart, and pierce my painful heart, and with one death rid me of a thousand deaths at once. For what thought do I think on my Sinnatus, which doth

not procure me double death ? What thing do I see belonging to him, which is not a treble torment unto me ? But it is cowardliness to wish for death, and couragiousness valiantly to take it. Yes, I can and will bestow my life for my Sinnatus' sweet sake. But, O God ! shall that tyrant remain alive to triumph in his treachery and vaunt in his villainy ? Shall I not see his fatal day before my final end ? It is his blood that will be a most sweet sacrifice to the ghost of Sinnatus, not mine ; and then can I end my life contentedly when I have offered up this acceptable sacrifice. And until such time as I have opportunity hereto, I will prolong my doleful days in direful grief, and only the hope of revengement shall heavily hold my loathsome life and sorrowful soul together. For other cause why I should desire life I have not, for that I am utterly deprived of all joys of life.

" For as the bird that is bruised with some blow lieth aloof on the leaves, and hears his fellows sing, and is not able to utter one warbling note out of his mournful voice, but rather hates the harmony which other birds do make, so I, my heart being bruised and broken, sit solitarily alone, and see some hang about their husband's neck, some closely clepe them in their arms, some trifle with them, some talk with

them, all which sight redoubleth my pain to think myself deprived of those pleasures; yea, to a wretched wounded heart that dwells in dole, every pleasant sight turns to bitter spite: and the only object which shall ever content my eyes, shall be the destruction of that tyrant, which hath brought me to this desolation."

Now Sinorix thinking that time had taken away her tears and sorrows, and supposing that neither she, neither any other had suspected him for the murder of her husband, began to enter into the lists of lust again, and with a new incountry of incontinency to set upon her. But she so much abhorred him, that if she but heard his name it caused her nature to fail in her, and all her senses to faint: so that when he saw no possibility to impell her to impiety, he meant to move her in the way of marriage, and caused her near kinsfolk and friends to solicit his suit unto her, who partly for fear of his displeasure, partly for that they knew it would be greatly to her advancement, laboured very earnestly in the matter, and were so importunate upon her that no answer would satisfy them. Now Camma, seeing she could not be rid of her friends, and foreseeing that by this

means she might be rid of her enemies, agreed to take him to husband. And the day of the solemnizing of the marriage being come, they went together to the temple of Diana, where all things according to custom being consummated, the bride-wife (as the use was) drank to her husband in drink, as he thought, but indeed in poison, which she had provided of purpose: and when she saw he had drunk up his death, she said unto him :—"Go now, and instead of thy marriage-bed get thee a grave, for thy marriage is turned to murder, a punishment most just for thy outrageous lust and cruel tyranny, for vengeance asketh vengeance, and blood blood, and they that sow slaughter shall be sure to reap ruin and destruction." Now Sinorix hearing these words and feeling the force of the poison to work within him, assayed all the remedies he could to cure himself, but all in vain. Camma also feeling the poison to prevail within her, fell upon her knees before the altar of Diana, uttering these words :—

"O Goddess, thou knowest how, since the death of my sweet husband, this life hath been most loathsome and sour unto me, and that only the offering up of this sacrifice kept me from him, which now in thy presence I have performed. I think myself to have

satisfied my duty, and purchased thereby a passport to pass to the place and paradise where my husband hath his habitation."

Immediately upon this, so well as she could, she crawled home to her house, where she was no sooner, but she had certain tidings brought her that Sinorix was dead. Wherewith with great joy she cast herself down upon her bed, and called her little children about her, and blessing and bussing them said :—

"Alas, pretty imps, who shall now defend you from your foes, who shall redress your wrongs ? Your father is gone, your mother is going, and you poor souls must bide behind to abide the brunt and bitter blasts of this wretched world. Ah, if the love which I bare my husband had not been exceeding great, nature would have caused me to have had some care of you, and for your sakes to have suffered myself sometime longer to live ; but now as I have shewed myself a loving wife, so have I scarce shewed myself a natural mother. But, alas ! it was reason I should prefer him before you, who was the author of you, and who blessed me with you. Well, I see now my time is come, my tongue begins to fail. Come, dear children, and take your last congé of your lost mother. God shield you from shame, God preserve you from

peril, God send you more prosperous fortune than your poor parents had. And thus farewell my fruit, farewell my flesh, farewell sweet babes; and O welcome my Sinnatus, whom I see in the skies ready to receive me!" And so in sorrow and joy she gave up the ghost.

Now I would wish you, blazing stars, which stand upon your chastity, to take light at this lot, to take heed by this harm; you see the husband slain, the ruffian fled, the lover poisoned, the wife dead, the friends comfortless, the children parentless. But it is naturally incident to women to enter into extremities, they are either too loving or too loathing, too courteous or too coy, too willing or too wilful, too merciful or too merciless, too forward or too froward, too friendly or too fiendly; the mean they always meanly account of. Otherwise she might with reason sooner than rigour have repressed his rage. But howsoever my words run, I would not you should take them to tend altogether to her dispraise, for as I must condemn her cruelty, so can I not but commend her constancy, and chastity, and think her worthy to be compared to Lucrece, Penelope, or what woman soever that ever had any pre-eminence of praise for her virtue. And I would wish my gallant

youths which delight to gaze in every garish glass, and to have an oar stirring in every beautiful boat, not to row past their reach, not to fix their fancy upon impossibilities, not to suffer themselves to be blasted with the beams of beauty, or scorched with the lightning of loving looks : such love towards the married is ever without law, such fire is without fear, such suits are without shame, such cankers, if they be not at the beginning cured, grow to the confusion of the whole body. Therefore, Gentlewomen, I leave it to your judgments to give sentence, whether be more worthy reprehension, he or she. He had the law of love on his side, she had the law of men and of marriage on her part ; love led him, which the gods themselves cannot resist, chastity guided her, which the gods themselves have lost ; he killed him whom he counted his enemy, she killed him whom she knew her fleshly friend ; she with reason might have prevented great mischief ; his wings were too much lined with lust to fly forth of his folly.

TEREUS AND PROGNE

TEREUS, King of Thrace, enamoured of Progne, daughter to Pandion, Prince of Athens, obtaineth her in marriage, and conveyeth her into his own country. Progne, desirous to see her sister Philomela, moveth Tereus to go to Athens, and to get licence to bring her into Thrace, who on the way falling into unlawful liking of her, forceth her to his pleasure, and cutteth out her tongue, that she might tell no tales. Progne, having hereof secret intelligence, in lieu of that foul fact, murdereth his and her own son, young Itys, and dresseth him in meats for his father's mouth, which horrible deed when Tereus would have revenged upon the mother and aunt, they escape his hands, and are transformed into birds.

If it were meet for mortal creatures to complain of their immortal Creator, then truly may we justly prepare complaint against our maker, for that of all

his creatures he hath made man most miserable. Herbs, trees, and plants, he hath framed without sense, whereby they neither feel the force of winter's blasts, neither the fire of summer's blaze : fowls, fishes, and beasts, he hath bereaved of a reasonable soul, whereby they bear the brunt of their bodies only, and are not molested with the motions of the mind : but man he hath made subject to infirmities of the body, to miseries of mind, to all storms of strife and pangs of pain. And as the cameleon changeth himself into the colour and hue of everything he doth view, so man is made apt to be transformed into any misfortune, and to receive any evil that reigneth upon the face of the earth. Yea, if we consider the whole course of our life, we begin with cries, and end with cares : for we are no sooner out of our mother's womb, but we forthwith cry to signify the sorrow which will ensue in our succeeding age : in our infancy our tender bodies are subject to many infirmities : in our childhood our weak minds are troubled with many toys : we are plied sore to silence, which is of hard digestion to us ; we fear the master's lowering lore, which is a continual torment unto us ; but oh, the sea of sorrow and waves of woe which then overwhelm us when we once arrive to man's estate !

What vain desires ! What fantastical follies ! What careless and spareless spending ! What prodigal pride ! What fiery flames of love ! What hair-brained heats of hate ! What pensive fear of parents' displeasure ! What solitariness in single life ! What mind to marry ! What misery in marriage ! What charge in children ! What care of their instruction ! What fear of their destruction ! And touching our own bodies, what often surfeitings ! What perilous pleurisies ! What fearful fevers ! What danger in war ! What peril in fight ! Yea, what sorrow which this age is not subject to ! Lastly, in old age we covetously cark for coin, we toil for trash, we think we never have enough ; we think all too much that is spent ; we take little pleasure in anything ; we think the world is changed, and that it is far worse than it was when we were young, only because our bodies are changed, and our vital heat so vanished away, that nothing seemeth pleasant unto us, though it be the same it was wont to be, so that we think the alteration to be in the thing, when it is in ourself. And then not only our memory faileth, our wits wear weak, and return to infancy again, but our bodies also are broken with cares, taken with cramps, shaken with palsies, tormented with the stone, lamed with the gout, dried

with dropsies, our sight weareth dim, our hearing deaf, our smelling small, our tasting untoothsome, our feelings feeble, yea, all our senses are almost without sense; and yet we are loath to die and leave our worldly muck; the fear of approaching death doth daily daunt us, and at length his deadly darts do utterly destroy us. And surely the consideration of this our miserable estate doth so resolve me unto sorrow, that if your presence did not sprinkle me with some dew of delight, I should hardly frame my wits to procure you pleasure by any pleasant history, but rather continue a dolorous discourse of our calamity. And yet the history I mean to tell shall not be altogether estranged from the argument of my former discourse, but though it manifest not our manifold misery, yet shall it at least set forth the gravity of our felicity. The history is this :—

The flourishing commonwealth of Athens had to their prince one Pandion, whose estate both fortune beautified with great wealth, and God blessed with goodly children, to wit two daughters of excellent beauty, the eldest named Progne, the youngest Philomela. Now fame being a tatling goddess, blazed the bruit of Progne abroad into divers countries, until at length the rumour of her renown rung about the ears

of Tereus, king of Thrace, who being a young lusty gallant, made no great account of the commendation which were given her, knowing, if he were disposed to marry, he might make his choice amongst a great number as good as she was, and more near neighbours unto him than Athens was. But destinies so drave that shortly after this, on a night in his sleep he seemed to see her stand apparently before him (only a strong imagination assuring him that it was she) which sight sunk so deeply into his heart and brought him such excessive delight, that he presently awaked, and missing the party that procured him such pleasure, his joy was turned to annoy; neither could he ever after that find any contentation in any thought or deed, but only in this determination to go have a true sight of her, whose seeming shadow had so dazzled his eyes; and with all speed repaired his ships, and prepared all things necessary for such a voyage, and by the help of good wind and will, shortly arrived there where his heart had already cast anchor, and sent ambassadors to the King to certify him of his coming, who received him with royalty fit for his regal estate. And at the first incountry of the two princes, Tereus said :—

"My coming unto you, O noble prince, is not as an

open enemy to invade you, for you see I am unarmed, neither as a sacred traitor to entrap you, for you know I am your friend : but that you may not marvel at my sudden coming, you shall understand it is to see your daughter the Lady Progne, for you shall soon perceive I pretend well unto her." Pandion answered :—

" As, most worthy prince, the cause of your coming is friendly, so can I not but friendly accept it, and how much I think myself honoured thereby, so much I count myself bound unto you."

And after a little parley passed between them of the estates of their realms and manners of their countries, Pandion preferred him to the sight of his daughter, whom after Tereus had saluted with a courteous congé, he entered into discoursing with in this sort :—

" If, fair Lady, I should tell the truth of my coming into this country, I think you would take it but for a trifling toy ; yea, if I should in words plainly set down the cause of this my enterprised journey, and the case which through your means I remain in, I doubt you would neither believe the cause, neither relieve my case : for that the strangeness of the one would breed great incredulity, and for the other the small acquaint-

ance I have with you, and less deserts towards you can crave small courtesy; yet if it please you to know, neither the desire to see this country, neither the renown of your virtue and beauty brought me hither, for though the report thereof be great, yet now I see I must needs say, that fame hath rather framed your praise maliciously than reported it truly; for one good part reported to be in you, I perceive by your countenance such confluence of good conditions, that I cannot but count the rumour which run of you rather sparing speech than right report. But the cause of my hasty coming and heavy case is this: it pleased the gods to present your seemly self to my presence in the same lovely likeness wherein you are at this present, what time I took such view of your sweet face, that approaching this day to your father's palace, before I knew who you were, what you were, or where you were, as you looked if you remember it, out at your chamber window, I said to my servants, "Lo! yonder stands the peerless paragon, princely Progne"; and since that sight in my sleep, I take the heavens to witness I never enjoyed one quiet sleep, but continued in contemplation how I might be placed in possession of that personage which drave me into such admiration. Now seeing it pleased the gods thus

miraculously to move me to travel to see you, and seeing the sight of your sweet face hath fast fettered my fancy in links of love, these may be humbly to desire you, neither to resist the motion of the gods, neither to regret the devotion of my good-will. And if I have preferred your love before all the ladies of my own land, if I make you that proffer which many princes have pressed for, if neither weariness of way, neither perils of sea could prohibit me from pursuing your good-will, if I be content to resign my kingdom, liberty, and all that I have into your hands, I shall desire you not to condemn my courtesy, but to countervail my pain and to return my good-will with like love and affection. This request also resteth to make unto you that you drive me not off with trifling delays, for neither will the extremity of my perplexity permit long delay, neither will the estate my kingdom standeth in suffer me long to be away."

Progne, hearing the earnest suit of this prince, and seeing nothing in him to be misliked, considering also what haste his request required, stood not upon the nice terms of her virginity, but with a reverence of majesty made him this answer :—

"Most worthy prince! whatsoever were the cause of your coming into this country, the King my father

hath to hold himself much beholding to your majesty, that it would please you to do him the honour to visit him : but touching the cause you pretend, I doubt not but your wisdom knoweth that dreams are doubtful, and visions are altogether vain, and therefore I must crave pardon if I hardly believe that upon so light a cause you would undertake such heavy travail, and I much muse that in your sleep the gods had no seemlier sight than myself to present unto you. But whether before you came hither the gods moved your mind, or whether being here your own fancy forced your affection towards me, assure yourself this, if your love be as loyal as your words seem wonderful in shewing the original thereof, you shall not find me either so discourteous as to condemn your good-will, either so ungrateful as not to requite it, marry as I may, which is for your hearty good-will to give you my heart ; for any benefit of my body it is not in me to bestow on you, for if you do me that injury to exact anything at my hands lasciviously, honesty will not allow it, whose bounds I mean not to transgress ; and if you do me that honour to pursue my good-will in the way of marriage, perchance my parents will not permit it, who only have power to place me at their pleasure. So that as the one half and moiety of me

is not mine, so the other part, if your good-will be as great as you pretend, shall be yours." Presently upon this he preferred his suit to her parents, who were no less glad of such a son-in-law than he of such a wife : and so out of hand the marriage with great solemnity was celebrated. Which done, he joyfully departed from his sorrowful father-in-law, and in short time safely landed with his wife in his own land, where they lived together the space of five years in such joy as they commonly enjoy, who carry fortunes, as it were, upon their shoulders, and abound in all things which they can wish or desire. But see the frailty of our felicity, mark the misery which mortal men are subject to ! A man would have thought this married couple, in love so loyal, in estate so high, in all things so happy, had been placed in perpetuity of prosperity. But alas ! what estate hath fortune ever made so invincible, which vice cannot vanquish ? who hath ever been established in such felicity, but that wickedness can work his overthrow ? what love hath ever been so fast bound, but by lust hath been loosed ? yea, the most faithful bond of friendship between Titus and Gysippus, through lust was violated ; the most natural league of love between Antiochus and his own son, through lust was broken ; and this most loyal love

between Tereus and Progne through lust was turned to loathsome hate. For it fortuned that Progne after they had been married together a while entered into great desire to see her sister Philomela, and lay very importunately upon her husband to go to Athens and request her father Pandion to let her come unto her. Tereus loved his wife so entirely that he would deny her nothing, but presently embarked himself and went to fetch Philomela unto her. And being arrived at Athens, he made Pandion privy to the cause of his coming. The old man was assailed with great sorrow to think he must part from his fair Philomela, the only stay and comfort of his old years; but Tereus entreated so earnestly that he could not deny him easily, and Philomela was so desirous to see her sister that had so lovingly sent for her, that she hung about her father's neck, kissed him, and used all the flatteries she could, to force him to yield his consent to her departure; wherewith he being vanquished, with weeping eyes in great grief and dolour delivered his daughter to Tereus, saying:—

"It is not my daughter only I deliver you, but my own life, for assure yourself, my life cannot last one minute longer than I shall hear she doth well, and if her return be not with speed, you shall hear of

my speedy return to the earth from whence I came."

Tereus desired him to be of good cheer, promising to be as careful of her well-doing as if she were his own sister or child. Whereupon the old man, blessing his daughter, gave her unto him. But like a simple man he committed the silly sheep to the ravening wolf.

Nay, there was never bloody tiger that did so terribly tear the little lamb, as this tyrant did furiously fare with fair Philomela. For being in ship together, he began filthily to fix his fancy upon her, and casting the fear of God from before his eyes, rooting the love of his wife out of his heart, contemning the holy rites of matrimony, and the sacred state of virginity, he fell to fleshly dalliance with her, and attempted to win that point of her which she held more dear and precious than her life, and which ought to be of curious regard to all women of honest behaviour. But having no other weapon but weeping to defend herself, by pitiful exclamations and cries she kept him from satisfying his insatiable desire. But as the ravening wolf having seized in his tearing claws some silly lamb, seeks some den to hide him in, that nothing hinder him from quietly enjoying his prey, so

he was no sooner arrived on the coasts of his own country, but that he secretly conveyed her to a grange of his own, far from any town or city, and there by force filthily deflowered her. The poor maid thus pitilessly spoiled, so soon as her grief would give her leave to speak, spit forth her venom against his villainy in this sort :—

"Ah, most tyrannous traitor ! hast thou thus betrayed my father and sister ? Hast thou no other to work thy wickedness on but me, who was the jewel of my father and the joy of my sister, and now by thy means shall be the destruction of the one and the desolation of the other ? O that my hands had strength to tear these staring eyes out of thy hateful head, or that my mouth were able to sound the trumpet of this thy trumpery, either to the court of my sister, or country of my father, that they might take revenge on thy villainy ! O cursed be the womb from whence thou camest, and the paps which gave thee suck ! O cursed be the cause of thy conception, and the Father that begat thee, who if he never otherwise in his life offended, yet doth he deserve to be plunged in the most painful pit of Hell only for begetting so wicked a son !"

Tereus, not able to endure this talk, and fearing

lest her words might bewray his wickedness, made no more ado but took his knife, and like a bloody butcher, cut her tongue forth of her head. This done, he caused her to be locked fast in a chamber, taking everything from her whereby she might use violence towards herself, and so went home to the Queen Progne his wife with this forged tale :—

"I am sorry, sweet wife, it is my chance to be the messenger of such sour news unto you, but seeing of force you must hear it, as good I now impart it as other hereafter report it unto you. And seeing it is an accident which ordinarily happeneth to morta wights, I trust of yourself you will give such order to your sorrow, that you will suffer it to sink no deeplier into your heart than wisdom would it should : carrying this in your remembrance that we are born to die, and that even in our swathe-clouts death may ask his due." "Alas," saith she, "and is Pandion departed ?" "No," saith he, "Pandion liveth, but his life is such that death would more delight him."

"Then farewell, my Philomela," saith she, "thy death I know is cause of this desolation, and thy death shall soon abridge my days." "Indeed," saith he, "so it is ; the gods have had her up into heaven, as one too good to remain on earth." "Ah, unjust

gods," saith she, "she is too good for them also. What pity, what piety, what right, what reason is in them, to deprive her of life now in the prime of her life, before she have tasted the chief pleasures of life, or any way deserved the pain of death?"

"Ah, sweet wife," saith he, "I beseech you by the love which you bear me, to moderate your martyrdom and assuage your sorrow, and only in me to repose your felicity: for I protest by these hands and tears which I shed to see your sorrow, that I will be to you instead of a father and a sister: yea, if you had a thousand fathers and a thousand sisters, all their good-wills together should not surmount mine alone."

These loving words caused her somewhat to cease from her sorrow, and she began to take the matter as patiently as her pain would permit her.

But to return to Philomela, who being kept close prisoner determined to pine herself to death, but the hope of revenge altered that determination, and she began to cast in her head how she might open the injury to her sister, which that tyrant had offered them both. At length she went this way to work; she wrought and embroidered cunningly in cloth the whole discourse of her course and careful case, which being finished, fortune so

framed that a gentleman riding late in the night had lost his way, and seeing a light in her chamber afar off, drew near to the window and called to Philomela, enquiring the way to the next town; whereupon Philomela opened the window, and seeing him to be a gentleman whom she thought would not stick to put himself in some peril to redress a lady's wrong, showed him the cloth which she so cunningly had wrought, and in the first place thereof was plainly written, to whom it should be delivered, and from whom. The gentleman took it at her hands, and plighted to her his faith, safely and secretly to deliver it to the queen. See the just judgment of God, who will suffer no evil done secretly, but it shall be manifested openly, as in times past he made the infant Daniel an instrument to detect the conspiracy of the two Judas judges, who falsely accused the good lady Susanna, and other times other ways: but this tyranny of Tereus was so terrible that the very stones in the walls would have bewrayed it, if there had been no other means used. Now Progne having this cloth conveyed unto her, and fully understanding how the case stood, notwithstanding her grief were great in the highest degree, yet (a marvellous thing a woman could do so) she concealed the matter secretly, hoping

to be revenged more speedily. But yet her husband's villainy towards her caused her to inveigh against him in this vehement sort :—

"O devilish deep dissembling of men ! Who would have thought that he which pretended so great good-will towards me, would have intended so great ill against me ? Why if my person could not please him, could none but my sister satisfy him ? And if he thought her most meet for his mischief, yet was it not villainy enough to vanquish her virginity, but that he must mangle and dismember her body also ? but what pity is to be looked for of such panthers which pass not of piety ? He sheweth his cursed careless kind, he plainly proves himself to proceed of the progeny of that traitor Aeneas, who wrought the confusion of the good Queen Dido, who succoured him in his distress. It is evident he is engendered of Jason's race, who disloyally forsook Medea that made him win the golden fleece ! He is descended of the stock of Demophoon, who through his faithless dealing forced Phyllis to hang herself ! He seems of the seed of Theseus, who left Ariadne in the deserts to be devoured, through whose help he subdued the monster Minotaur, and escaped out of the intricate

labyrinth ! He cometh of Nero his cruel kind, who carnally abused his own mother Agrippina, and then caused her to be slain and ripped open, that he might see the place wherein he lay being an infant in her belly ! So that what fruits but filthiness is to be gathered of such grafts ? What boughs but beastliness grow out of such stems ? No ! I will never make other account but that faith which a man possesseth is nothing else but forgery ; truth which he pretendeth nothing else but trifling ; love lust ; words wiles ; deeds deceit ; vows vanities ; faithful promises faithless practises ; earnest oaths errant arts to deceive ; sorrows subtleties ; sighs slights ; groans guiles ; cries crafts ; tears treason : yea, all their doings nothing but baits to entice us, hooks to entangle us, and engines utterly to undo us ! O that my mouth could cause my words to mount above the skies, to make the gods bend down their eyes to take view of the villainy of this viper, then no doubt but either the city would sink wherein he is, or the earth would open and swallow him up, or that at least some plague should be thundered down upon him, which might most painfully punish him ! Or why may not the gods use me as an instrument to execute their vengeance on him ? The wife of Dionysius, the tyrant, wrought

the will of the gods on her husband, and miserably murdered him, and why is it not lawful for me to do the like? Yes, I can and will devise such exquisite punishment for this tyrant, that it shall fear all that come after from the like filthiness."

Now to further her fury she had this opportunity offered her: it was the same time of the year that the sacrifices of Bacchus were to be celebrated, what time the use was for the women to go about the country disguised as if they had been mad, whereupon the Queen took a troop of women with her and gat to the grange where Philomela was, brake open the doors and brought her home with her to her palace, and there they two, the one with signs, and the other with words, entered into consultation how to be revenged on the treachery of Tereus: and surely if a man be disposed to do his enemy a displeasure indeed, if he follow my counsel, let him follow the counsel of a woman; nay, all the devils in hell could not so have tormented Tereus as they did, so that I think yourselves will say her fury exceeded his folly, and her severity in punishing, his cruelty in offending. For he had by her one only sweet son named Itys. My tongue is not able to tell, and my heart rends in twain to think, that a reasonable creature should so

rage in rigour, that a woman should so want compassion, that a mother should work such mischief to her own child. For as I was about to tell you, she had by her husband one only son, and she his own mother miserably meant to murder him, thereby to be revenged on her husband. O ruthless rage, O merciless mother! I have read of a woman named Althea who wrought the death of her own son Meleager, for that he before had slain two or three of her brethren; likewise Agave helped to tear in pieces her own son Penthey, for that he would not do honour to the god Bacchus: but for a mother to murder, to mangle, to make man's meat of her own child being an innocent, an infant that never did or thought amiss, who ever heard anything more monstrous in nature, more beastly in tyranny, or more bloody in cruelty? For mark the manner of this murder: as her sister and she sat in her privy chamber meditating of this mischief, in came Itys, the pretty elf being two or three years of age, and seeing his mother sit sadly, said unto her: "Mam, how dost, why dost weep?" and took her about the neck and kissed her, saying: "I will go call my dad to come and play with thee"; but she like a tyrannous tiger flung him from her saying: "Away imp of impiety!

how like thy father thou art, not only in favour, but in flattery also: I will make thee make thy dad sport shortly." The infant rose again, and came dugling to her saying, "Why do you beat me, Mam? I have learned my Christcross to-day, so I have, and my father saith he will buy me a golden coat, and then you shall not kiss me, no, you shall not," but this trifling dalliance could not turn her devilishness. But (O dreadful deed, and lamentable case) she took her pretty babe by the hair of the head, and drew him into a privy corner provided for the purpose, and first cruelly cut off his harmless head, then butcherly quartered his comely carcase, and between her sister and her dressed it in order of meat, which done, (as the custom was in those feasts of Bacchus) she sent for the King her husband to sup with her, and set before him for the first service his own son. Who after he had fiercely fed on his own flesh, and filled his belly with his own bowels, he asked for his little son Itys: the Queen answered: "Why do you not see him? I am sure you feel him." And as he stared about the chamber to have seen him, out stepped Philomela from behind a cloth of Arras, and flung the child's head in the father's face, whereby he knew what banquet he had

been bid to ; and so soon as his senses were come to him, which that sour sight had taken away, he drew his rapier and thought to have offered up the blood of his wife and her sister for a sacrifice unto his son, but they fled from him, and as Ovid reporteth were turned into birds, meaning they were not worthy human shape or the use of reason, which were such cruel monsters altogether devoid of ruth and reason. It were hard here, Gentlewoman, for you to give sentence, who more offended of the husband or the wife, seeing the doings of both the one and the other near in the highest degree of devilishness—such unbridled lust and beastly cruelty in him, such monstrous mischief and murder in her ; in him such treason, in her such treachery ; in him such falseness, in her such furiousness ; in him such devilish desire, in her such revengeful ire ; in him such devilish heat, in her such haggish hate, that I think them both worthy to be condemned to the most bottomless pit in hell.

GERMANICUS AND AGRIPPINA

GERMANICUS, a young gentleman of small living, of the kin, and in the court of Octavian, the Emperor, becoming amorous of the Lady Agrippina, through great suit getteth her to wife : and through his valiancy winneth to be proclaimed heir-apparent to the Empire. Whose state Tiberius, his cousin, envying, despatcheth him privily with poison, and Agrippina for grief thereof refusing all bodily sustenance, most miserably famisheth herself to death.

The astronomers are of this opinion that the planets have pre-eminence over us, and that the stars stir us up to all our enterprises, but I am rather settled into this sentence, that not the planets but our passions have the chief place in us, and that our own desires, not the destinies, drive us to all our doings : which

opinion I may justify by the example of a gentleman named Germanicus, whose fortune neither the Fates fixed, neither the planets planted, neither the stars stirred, neither the destinies drave, neither the skies caused, but first his own fond fancy framed, and then his own ambitious desire finished, as by the sequel of this history you shall see. For this gentleman Germanicus, frequenting the Court of Octavian, the Emperor, chanced to fix his eyes on the face of a noble gentlewoman named Agrippina, the daughter of M. Agrippa ; and as the mouse mumpeth so long at the bait, that at length she is taken in trap, so he bit so long at the bait of her beauty, that at length he was caught in Cupid's snare. And on a time as she was at cards in the presence-chamber, this youth stood staring in her face in a great study, which she perceiving, to bring him out of his study prayed him to reach her a bowl of wine which stood upon a cupboard by, and as he approached therewith to the place of her presence, his senses were so ravished with the sight of her sweet face, that he let the bowl fall forth of his hands : and retiring back with seemly shamefastness, went for more, and being come therewith she thanked him for his pains saying, "I pray God that fall of the wine hinder not my winning

and bring me ill luck, for I know many that cannot away to have salt, or drink, or any such-like thing, fall towards them."

"Madam," saith Germanicus, "I have often heard it disputed in schools that such as the cause of everything is, such will be the effect; and seeing the cause of this chance was good, I doubt not but the effect will follow accordingly; and if any evil do ensue thereof, I trust it will light on my head through whose negligence it happened." Agrippina answered, "As I know not the cause, so I fear not the effect greatly, and indeed as you say hitherunto you have had the worst of it, for that thereby you have been put to double pains."

"If that be all," saith he, "rather than it shall be said any evil to have ensued of this chance, I will persuade myself that every pain which you shall put me to, shall be double delights and treble pleasure unto me." "You must use," saith she then, "great eloquence to yourself to persuade you to such an impossibility." "Oh if it please you," saith he, "there is an orator which of late hath taken up his dwelling within me, who hath eloquence to persuade me to a far greater matter than this."

"If," saith she, "he persuade you to things no

more behoofful for yourself than this, if you follow my counsel, you shall not give him houseroom long." "Madam," saith he, "it is an assured sign of a free and friendly mind to give good counsel, but it is hard for one in bondage and out of his own possession to follow it. For what knoweth your honour whether he have already taken entire possession of the house wherein he is, which if it be so, what wit is able to devise a writ to remove him from thence?" "If, sir," saith she, "he entered by order of law and paid you truly for it, it is reason he enjoy it; marry, your folly was great to retain such a tenant! but if he intruded himself by force, you may lawfully extrude him by strength."

"Indeed," saith he, "he entered *vi et armis* forcibly, but after upon certain parlance passed between us, I was content he should remain in peaceable possession: marry! he hath paid me nothing yet, but he promiseth so frankly, that if the performance follow, a house with beams of beaten gold, and pillars of precious stones, will not countervail the price of it; yea, if I were placed in quiet possession thereof I would think myself richer, I will not say than the Emperor, but which is most, than God himself who possesseth heaven and earth: and as the hope of

obtaining the effect of that promise heaveth me up to heaven, so the doubt to be deceived thereof driveth me down to hell."

"And what joyly fellow," saith she, "is this that promiseth so frankly? will he not promise golden hills and perform dirty dales?" "Would to God," saith he, "your seemly self were so well acquainted with him as I am, then would I make you judge of the worthiness of the thing he hath promised, for that you know the goodness thereof none better!" The lady smelling the drift of his devices, and seeing the end of his talk seemed to tend to love and that touching her own self, thought not good to draw on their discourse any longer, but concluded with this answer :—

"As I am altogether ignorant what your obscure talk meaneth, so care I not to be acquainted with any such companion as your landlord is, for so methinks by you I may more fitly call him, than term him your tenant," and so departed away into her lodging. Germanicus likewise, his mistress being gone, gat him to his chamber to entertain his amorous conceits, and being alone brake forth into these words :—

"O friendly fortune! if continually hereafter thou furiously frown upon me, yet shall I all the days of

my life count myself bound unto thee for the only pleasure which this day thou hast done me, in giving me occasion of talk with her, whose angel's voice made such heavenly harmony in my heavy heart, that where before it was plunged in perplexity, it is now placed in felicity, and where before it was oppressed with care, it is now refreshed with comfort. Yea, every lovely look of her is able to cure me if I were in most deep distress of most dangerous disease; every sweet word proceeding from her sugared lips, is of force to fetch me from death to life. But, alas! how true do I try that saying, that every commodity hath a discommodity annexed unto it! how doth the remembrance of this joy, put me in mind of the annoy which the loss of this delight will procure me!

"Yea, it maketh all my senses shake to think that some other shall enjoy her more worthy of her than myself: and yet who in this court, nay in all Christendom, nay in the whole world, is worthy of her? No, if she never have any until she have one worthy of her every way, she shall never have any. And shall I then, being but a poor gentleman, seek to insinuate myself in place so high? Shall I by my rude attempt purchase at least the displeasure of her friends and parents, and perchance hers also, whom to

displease would be no less displeasant unto me than death ? Alas ! must love needs be rewarded with hate ? Must courtesy needs be countervailed with cruelty ? Must good-will needs be returned with displeasure ? Is it possible that bounty should not abide where beauty doth abound, and that courtesy should not accompany her comeliness ? Yes, I am sure at the least she will suffer me to love her, though her young years and high estate will not suffer her to love me ; and though she will not accept me for husband, yet I am sure she will not reject me for servant ; and though she will not receive my service, yet I doubt not but she will courteously take the tendering thereof unto her. And touching her parents' displeasure, what care I to procure the ill-will of the whole world, so I may purchase her good-will ! Yea, if I should spend the most precious blood in my body in the pursuit of so peerless a piece, I would count it as well bestowed as if it were shed in the quarrel of God, my prince, or country. For she is the goddess whom I will honour with devotion, she is the country in whose cause and quarrel I will spend life, living, and all that I have ! Neither is there much cause why her friends should storm much at the matter, for though my lands

and revenues are not great, yet am I of the blood royal, and near kinsman to the emperor, who will not suffer me to want anything pertaining to my estate and degree. Why Alerane, a youth like myself, practised the mighty Emperor Otho his daughter and darling Adalesia, stole her away and married her, and do I stick to attempt the like with one of far meaner estate, though of far more worthiness? And though frowning fortune tossed him for a while in the tempestuous seas of adversity, yet at length he arrived at the haven of happy estate, and was reconciled to the good grace and favour of the Emperor again. And though at the first my ship be shaken with angry blasts, yet in time I doubt not but to be safely landed on the shore, and have my share of that which the showers of shrewd fortune shall keep me from. He is not worthy to suck the sweet who hath not first savoured the sour! And as the beauty of a fair woman being placed by a foul blazeth more brightly, so each joy is made more pleasant by first tasting some sour sops of sorrow! Did not the peril which Leander ventured in the sea, and the pain which he took in swimming, make his arrival to the haven of his heavenly Hero more happy and pleasant? Yes, no doubt of it! for besides

the feeling of the present pleasure, the remembrance of the peril past delighteth. Besides that by how much more a man hazardeth himself for his mistress' sake, by so much the more he manifesteth the constancy of his love, and meriteth meed at her hands the more worthily. This saying also is no less tried than true, that fortune ever favoureth the valiant, and things the more hard the more haughty, high, and heavenly: neither is any thing hard to be accomplished by him which hardily enterpriseth it!"

With these and suchlike sayings encouraging himself, he purposed to pursue his purpose, and failed not daily to attend upon his mistress with all duty and vigilance, and sought all occasions he could to let her understand his loyal love and great good-will towards her; which she perceiving, disdained not acknowledge by her amiable and courteous countenance towards him, wherewith he held himself as well satisfied as if he had been made monarch of the whole world. And though he were often determined in words to present his suit unto her, yet when it came to the point he should have spoken, fear of offending her altogether disappointed his purpose, and made him mute in the matter he minded to utter; but at length

perceiving that delay bred danger, for that she had many other suitors, and feeling by experience, that as fire the more it is kept down, the more it flameth up, so love the more he sought to suppress him, the more fiery forces he expressed within him, he began to set fear aside, and to force a supply of courage in his faint heart ; and seeing his mistress sit in the presence alone, he entered into reasoning with her in this manner :—

"Madam, for that I see you without company, I am the bolder to presume to press in place, whereof though I be altogether unworthy, yet am I altogether willing to supply it, and if my company may content you as well as your sight satisfieth me, I doubt not but you will accept it in good part ; and so much the less I hope my company shall be cumbersome to you, for that you are busied about nothing whereto my presence may be prejudicial. And, verily, when I consider the common course of life which your sweet self, and other maids of your estate lead, methinks it is altogether like the spending of your time at this present, which is, with your leave be it spoken, idly, unfruitfully without pleasure or profit ; and if my credit were such with you to crave credit for that which I shall speak, I would not doubt but

to persuade you to another trade of life more commendable in the world, more honourable amongst all men, and more acceptable in the sight of God. For believe me, I pity nothing more than virgins' vain piety, who think they merit meed for living chastely, when indeed they deserve blame for spending their time wastily."

"Sir," saith she, "as your company contenteth me well enough, so your talk liketh me but a little; for though I must confess I sit at this present without doing anything, yet in my fancy it is better to be idle, than ill-employed, as yourself are now in reprehending that state of life, which excelleth all other as far as the sun doth a star, or light darkness, and wherein I mean for my part to pass the pilgrimage of this my short life, if either God dispose me not, or my friends force me not to the contrary."

"God forbid, Madam," saith he, "you should continue your time in any such trifling trade of life, which indeed is to be counted no life at all; as the Grecian ladies most truly testify, who (as Homer reporteth) count their age from the time of their marriage, not from the day of their birth; and if they be demanded how old they be, they begin to reckon from their marriage and so answer accordingly.

For then only (say they) we begin to live, when we have a house to govern, and may command over our children and servants."

"Tush," saith the lady, "this is but the sentence and proper opinion of one peculiar people, who perchance by the nature of their country, or otherwise, are more desirous of husbands than other; neither is it any more reason that we should be tied to their example, than they be bound to follow our Virgin Vestals or other, who consume the whole course of their life without contaminating their corps with the company of men." "Nay rather," saith he, "without receiving their perfection from men, according to the opinion of Aristotle. But, Madam, I did not produce that example as necessary for all to follow, but as probable to prove and show, what course account they made of virginity, which you so highly esteem of. But to leave particular opinions, and come to general constitutions and customs, I mean both natural, human, and divine laws, and you shall see them all to make against you. And first, if you consider nature's laws, which in the doings of creatures without reason are plainly set down, you shall see no living wight in the universal world, but that so soon as by age they are

apt thereto, apply themselves to that life whereby their kind may be conserved and number increased. Behold the high-flying falcon, which soareth so high in the air that a man would think she would stoop to neither lure nor lust, yet she is no sooner an entermewer, or at the farthest a white hawk, but that of her own accord she cometh to the call of the tassel-gentle her make. Likewise the doe, which flingeth so freely about the woods as though she made no account of the male, yet she is no sooner a sores sister, but that she seeks the society of the buck. Yea, if it would please your seemly self to enter into the consideration of your own nature, or if your courtesy would account me worthy to have the examination of your secret thoughts, I doubt not but you would confess yourself to flee a fiery force of that natural inclination which is in other creatures; which being so, you must grant to deal unnatural in resisting that natural motion which cannot be ill or idle, because nature hath planted it in you: for God and nature do nothing vainly or vilely! And in that some do amiss in rebelling against nature, their own scrupulous niceness is the cause, when they will lay on themselves heavier burdens than they are able to bear, and refuse to bear

those burdens which nature hath appointed them to bear, which are but light."

"What talk you, Sir," saith she, "so much of nature and of creatures without reason, as though we ought to follow either the instinct of the one, either the example of the other? I have been always taught that reason is the rule to direct our doings by, and that we ought to lay before us the actions of animals endued with reason to follow and imitate. For if you stick so strictly to the example of reasonless creatures, you should use the company of women but once or twice at the most in the year, as most of them do with their females, whereto I am sure you would be loth to be tied."

"Madam," saith he, "a gentlewoman of this city hath answered this objection already for me." "Why then," saith she, "will you condemn their doings in some points, and place them for patterns to be practised by in other some?"

"Yea, why not?" saith he. "Otherwise you might generally take exception against the example of men, for that some men in some matters do amiss. The good ever is to be used, and the ill refused. But to come to the doings of men which you seem to desire, doth not every man so soon as his daughter

is arrived to ripe years, travail to bestow her in marriage, whereby she may enjoy the fruits of love, and participate with the pleasures incident to that estate? Whereby they plainly shew that the cause why they begot them with pleasure, and bring them up with pain, is to have them enter into that trade of life, wherein not only themselves may live happily abounding in all pleasure, but also by the fertile fruit of their body, make their mortal parents immortal: that when they with age shall be wasted and withered away, the seed of their seed may begin greenly to grow and flourishingly to spring, to the great comfort of both the father and daughter. For what pleasure the grandfather takes in the sporting pastime of his proper daughter's pretty children, I think you partly understand, and what delight the mother takes in the toys of her little son, you soon shall perfectly perceive, if it please you friendly to follow counsel which I frankly preach unto you! For do you think if virginity were of such virtue, that parents would not rather pain themselves to keep their dear daughters modest maids, than strain themselves and their substance to join them in Juno's sacred bond? Yes, persuade your sweet self if your mother were so persuaded she would rather lock you up close in her

closet, than suffer anybody to enjoy the sovereign sight of your beauty, or once aspire to your speech whereby you might be persuaded to some other kind of life. But she, experienced by years, knoweth best what is best for your behoof, and would you should follow her example, and make no conscience to lose that which she herself hath lost, which, except she had lost, we had lost so rare a jewel as your seemly self are. With what a loss it had been to myself, I dare not say, lest you count verity vanity, and truth trifling and flattery. But to our purpose! you perceive, as I said, your parents pleased with the access of gentlemen unto you, whereby you may conceive their mind is you should accept such service as they proffer, and partake with those pleasures which they prefer unto you."

"Why, Sir," saith she, "you altogether mistake the meaning of men in this matter; for when fathers tender marriages to their daughters, it is not for any mind they have to have them married, but only for fear they should fall to folly other ways; for knowing the fickle frailness of youth, and our proclivity to pravity and wickedness, they provide us marriages to prevent mischiefs; and seeing of evils the least is to be chosen, they count marriage a less evil than lightness of our life and behaviour."

"Alas, good Madam," saith he, "why do you so much profane the holy state of wedlock as to count it in the number of evils; whereas the gods themselves have entered into that state; whereas Princes pleasantly pass their time therein; whereas by it only mankind is preserved, and amity and love amongst men conserved, of the worthiness whereof I am not worthy to open my lips."

"Sir," saith she, "I speak it not of myself, but according to the opinion of the most wise and learned philosophers that ever lived; amongst whom one, Arminius, so much misliked of marriage, that being demanded why he would not marry, answered because there were so many inconveniences incident to that estate, that the least of them is able to slay a thousand men."

"Why, Madam," saith he, "you must consider there is nothing in this mortal life so absolutely good and perfect but that there be inconveniences as well as commodities incurred thereby. By that reason you may take the sun out of the world for that it parcheth the summer's green, and blasteth away the beauty of those that blaze their face therein. But to leave natural and human laws, and come to the divine precepts proceeding from God's own mouth, doth not God say 'it is not good for man to live alone,'

and therefore made Eve for an helper and comforter? Likewise in divers places of Scripture he doth not only commend marriage to us, saying, 'marriage and the bed undefiled are honourable,' but also commandeth us to it, saying, 'You shall forsake father and mother and shall follow your wives.'"

"Why, Sir," saith she, "and doth not God say, 'it is good for man not to touch a woman, and if thou be unmarried remain so'? But why allege you not this text, 'it is better to marry than to burn'; whereby is plainly showed that marriage is but a mean to medicine the burning in concupiscence and lust, and therefore preferred. But because we be entered into divine mysteries, I would refer you to a place of Scripture, where it is reported that in Heaven virgins chiefly serve God and set forth his glory. And Mahomet, the great Turk, who was in heaven, saith he saw there virgins, who if they issued forth of Heaven, would lighten the whole world with their brightness, and if they chanced to spit into the sea, they would make the whole water as sweet as honey; but there is no mention of married folk."

"Belike," saith he, "those virgins be like yourself, and then no marvel though God be delighted with the sight of them, which perchance is the cause He

hath them in Heaven to attend upon Him, as first Hebe, and after Ganymedes, did upon Jupiter. But generally of women the Scripture saith that by bringing forth of children they shall be saved and enjoy a place in heaven, which must be by marriage, if honestly. But because I am persuaded that it is only for argument sake that you disallow marriage, and that you pretend otherwise in words than you intend to do in works, I am content to give you the honour of the field, and thus far to yield my consent to your opinion, that virginity considered of its own nature simply without circumstance is better than matrimony, but because the one is full of peril, the other full of pleasure, the one full of jeopardy, the other full of security, the one as rare as the black swan, the other as common as the black crow, of good things I think the more common the more commendable."

"If," saith she, "I have gotten any conquest hereby, I am to thank my own cause not your courtesy, who yield when you are able to stand no longer in defence."

"Nay, Madam, say not so," saith he, "for in that very yielding to your opinion, I proved marriage better than virginity for that it is more common :

neither would I have you turn my silence in this matter into lack of science and knowledge, or reprehend me if I spare to enforce further proof in a matter sufficiently proved already, no more than you would rebuke a spaniel which ceaseth to hunt when he seeth the hawk seized on the partridge. But you may marvel, Madam, what is the cause that maketh me persuade you thus earnestly to marriage, which as mine own unworthiness willeth me to hide, so your incomparable courtesy encourageth me to disclose, which maketh me think that it is no small cause which can make you greatly offended with him who beareth you great good-will, and that what suit soever I shall prefer unto you, you will either grant it or forgive it, pardon it or pity it. Therefore, may it please you to understand, that since not long since I took large view of your virtue and beauty, my heart hath been so inflamed with the bright beams thereof, that nothing is able to quench it, but the water which floweth from the fountain that first infected me. And if pity may so much prevail with you as to accept me, I dare not say for your husband, but for your slave and servant, assure yourself there shall no doubt of danger drive me from my duty towards you, neither shall any lady whatsoever have

more cause to rejoice in the choice of her servant than yourself shall ; for that I shall account my life no longer pleasant unto me than it shall be employed in your service."

Agrippina, dyeing her lily cheeks with vermilion red, and casting her eyes on the ground, gave him this answer :—

"As I am to yield you thanks for your good-will, so am I not to yield consent to your request, for that I neither mind to marry, neither think myself worthy to retain any such servant : but if I were disposed to receive you any way, I think the best manner mean enough for your worthiness."

Immediately hereupon there came company unto them, which made them break off their talk, and Agrippina being got into her chamber, began to think on the suit made unto her by Germanicus ; and by this time Cupid had so cunningly carved and engraved the idol of his person and behaviour in her heart, that she thought him worthy of a far more worthy wife than herself ; and persuading herself by his words and looks that his love was loyal without lust, true without trifling, and faithful without feigning, she determined to accept it if her parents would give their consent thereto. Now Germanicus nothing

dismayed with her former denial for that it had a courteous close, so soon as opportunity served, set on her again in this sort :—

"Now, Madam, you have considered my case at leisure, I trust it will stand with your good pleasure to make me a more comfortable answer."

"I beseech you, Sir," saith she, "to rest satisfied with my former answer, for other as yet I am not able to make you."

"Alas, Madam," saith he, "the extremity of my passion will not suffer long prolonging of compassion ; wherefore I humbly beseech you presently to pass your sentence either of bale or bliss, of salvation or damnation, of life or death. For if the heavens have conspired my confusion, and that you mean rigorously to reject my good-will, I mean not long to remain alive to trouble you with any tedious suit, for I account it as good reason to honour you with the sacrifice of my death, as I have thought it convenient to bestow upon you the service of my life."

"Alas, Sir," saith she, "this jesting is nothing joyful unto me, and I pray you use no more of it, for the remembrance of that which you speak of in sport, maketh me feel the force thereof in good earnest : for a thousand deaths at once can not be so dreadful unto

me, as once to think I should live to procure the death of any such as you are."

"If," saith he, "you count my words sport, jest and dalliance, assure yourself it is sport without pleasure, jest without joy, and dalliance without delight, as tract of time shall shortly try for true. But if you love not to hear of my death, why like you not to give me life, which you may do only by the consent of your good-will?"

"Why, Sir," saith she, "you know my consent consisteth not in myself but in my parents, to whom I owe both awe and honour; therefore it behoveth you first to seek their consent."

"Why, Madam," saith he, "shall I make more account of the meaner parts than of the head. You are the head and chief in this choice, and therefore let me receive one good word of your good-will, and then let heaven and earth do their worst. It is not the coin, countenance, or credit of your parents that I pursue for to win. With such wealth as your good-will, I could be content to lead a poor life all the days of my life, so that you be maintained according to your will and worthiness."

"Well," saith she, "seeing I am the only mark you shoot at, assay by all the means you may to get

my friends' good-will, and if you level anything straight you shall not miss me."

Germanicus upon this procured the Emperor's letters to her father in his behalf, who having perused those letters said he trusted the Emperor would give him leave to dispose of his own according to his own pleasure, and that his daughter was too near and dear unto him to see her cast away upon one, who for lack of years wanted wisdom to govern her, and for lack of lands living to maintain her; and calling his daughter before him, he began to expostulate with her in this sort:—

"Daughter, I ever heretofore thought you would have been a solace and comfort to my old years, and the prolonger of my life, but now I see you will increase my hoary hairs, and be the hastener of my death. Doth the tender care, the careful charge, and chargeable cost, which I have ever used in bringing you up, deserve this at your hands that you should pass a grant of your good-will in marriage without my consent? Is the piety towards your parents, and the duty of a daughter towards her father, so utterly forgotten, that you will prefer the love of an unthrift before my displeasure, and to please him care not to displease your parents, who travail to bestow you with

one worthy your estate, and ours? No! never think Germanicus shall enjoy you with my good-will, nor never take me for your father if you grant him your good-will!"

Agrippina hearing this cruel conclusion of her father, with bashful countenance and trembling tongue, framed her answer in this form:—

"I beseech you, good father, not to think me so graceless a child as once to think, much less to do, anything which may heap your heaviness or hasten your death, the least of which two, would be more bitter unto me than death. For if it please you to understand, I have not granted my good-will to any, unless your consent be gotten thereto. Neither have I, as you say, preferred the love of an unthrift before your displeasure, but as I cannot let that noble gentleman Germanicus to love me, so can I not, to confess the truth, but love him, marry, in heart only, for my body as you gave it me so shall you dispose of it. And as I faithfully promise you by the love which of duty I owe you, that I will never have any to husband without your good-will, so I humbly beseech you for the affection which by nature you bear me, that you will never force me to any without my good-will. For if, for the transitory life you have given me, you make

me pay so dearly as to be linked with one against my liking, I must needs count it a hard pennyworth, and well may I wish that I had never been born. I beseech you, Sir, consider the inconveniences always incident to those marriages, where there is more respect of money than of the man, of honours than of honesty, of goods than of good-will of the parties each to other! What strife, what jars, what debate at bed and at board, at home and abroad, about this, about that! never quietness with contentation, never merry countenance without counterfeiting, never loving deeds without dissembling! And whence but from this rotten root springeth so many dishonest women, so many ill-living men? Is it not the loathing of never-liked lips that maketh women stray from their husbands to strangers? And is it not either the difference of years, either the diversity of manners, or disagreement of natures, that maketh the husband forsake his wife and follow other women? And where are any of these differences or inequalities between the married, but where the force of friends, not liberty of love, linketh them together? These things by your wisdom considered, I trust as you restrain me from one whom I love, so you will not constrain me to any whom I love not. In so doing, doubt you

not but you shall find in me modesty meet for a maid, virtue fit for a virgin, duty meet for a daughter, obedience fit for a child."

Her father having mildly heard her modest talk, told her he meant not to force her to any, but would provide her a husband whom he doubted not should like her better every way than Germanicus did, and therefore willed her to put out of her mind the liking she had conceived of him ; and so gave her leave to depart. And being in her chamber, she began to devise all the means she could to root out of her heart the love she bare Germanicus : and as soon revoked to her memory his lack of living, his little countenance and credit, as soon her father's displeasure, and her own preferment, with many other discommodities arising that way. But nothing prevailed ; for as the bird caught in lime, or coney in hay, or deer in toil, the more they strive the faster they stick, so the more diligently she laboured to get out of the Labyrinth of Love, the more doubtfully was she intricated therein. And as one climbing on high, his feet failing and he in danger to fall, more firmly fasteneth his hold than he did before, so love, seeing himself ready to be dislodged out of her breast, took such sure hold and fortified himself so strongly within

her, that no force was of force to fetch him from thence. Which the good gentlewoman perceiving, thought best for her ease and quiet to yield to the summons of love to be disposed at his pleasure. Wherein no doubt she had reason ; for as the swift running stream if it be not stopped runneth smoothly away without noise, but if there be any dam or lock made to stay the course thereof, it rageth and roareth and swelleth above the banks, so love, if we obey his law and yield unto his might, dealeth gently with us and reigneth over us like a loving Lord, but if we withstand his force and seek to stay the passage of his power, he rageth over us like a cruel tyrant ; which this gentlewoman, as I said, perceiving, without any more resistance determined in her heart to love Germanicus only and ever.

Now Germanicus, notwithstanding the angry looks of the father, the frowning face of the mother, and the strange counterfeit countenance of the daughter, followed his suit so effectually, used such apt persuasions to the maid, and in short time insinuated himself so far into her familiarity, that her parents lowered not so fast, but she allured as fast, and thought she received no other contentation in the whole world but in his company. Which her parents

perceiving, and besides dreading the Emperor's displeasure, thought as good by their consent to let them go together, as by severity to keep them asunder, whom the gods seemed to join together. And so much the rather they were induced thereto, for that they saw their daughter so affected to Germanicus, that the hearing of any other husband was hateful and hurtful unto her. And hereupon the marriage was concluded and consummated ; and to this bargain, only the fancy of Germanicus forced him. Now see whither his ambitious desire drave him. For being in proper possession of his proper wife, he was not able to maintain her according as his princely mind desired, for that his own living was little, and her parents would not part with much, because she had matched herself not anything to their mind. Whereupon, in hope of preferment and advancing his estate, he applied himself diligently to the Emperor's service, and in short time, with valiant exploits achieved in war, and great wisdom and discretion shewed in time of peace, he won such credit with the Emperor, that he held him most dear unto him, and caused him to be proclaimed heir-apparent to his crown and empire. With which news Germanicus congratulated his new-married wife in this sort :—

"It is not unknown unto me, dear wife, that for my sake you have somewhat sustained the ill-will and displeasure of your friends and parents; it is not unknown likewise to you, that for your sake I have sustained some labour in seeking our preferment, and getting the Emperor's good-will who only may prefer us. Now as the one hath made your life less pleasant than I desire or you deserve, so the other shall advance our state so high, as yourself can wish, or I be able to wield, so that the commodities of the one shall countervail the inconveniences of the other. For you shall understand, that the Emperor doth not only for the present time provide for me as if I were his own child, but also for the time to come hath proclaimed me sole heir to his diadem and realm! Which estate, as I never sought so much as in thought for myself, knowing me to be altogether unworthy of it, so I think myself most happy to have aspired thereto, only for your sake whom I know worthy of all the honour in the world. For as it would have been a hell and horror to my heart to have seen you live in meaner calling than you are worthy of, so will it be a heavenly mirth to my mind to see you a prince in state, as well as in stature, beauty, and virtue!"

"Master Germanicus," saith she, "I promise you by the love which I bear you, for greater bond I have not to confirm my words by, that it doth me more good to see you thus pleasantly disposed than to hear the news which you have imparted unto me, for the one, I am sure, cannot hurt you, but what harm the other may procure you, I fear to think, and faint to say. Alas! my Germanicus, are you to know the perils which princely state bringeth, the falsehood in friends, the treason in nobility, the rebellion in commonalty, the envy of the weak, the injury of the strong? Besides, you see boisterous winds do most of all shake the highest towers; the higher the place is, the sooner and sorer is the fall; the tree is ever the weakest towards the top; in greatest charge are greatest cares; in largest seas are sorest tempests; envy always shooteth at high marks, and a kingdom is more easily gotten than kept. For to get is the gift of fortune, but to keep is the power of prudence and wisdom, especially where there be many that catch for it; yea, and when a man shall have no faithful friends in saving it. For Ennius saith flatly, there is no friendly or faithful dealing to be looked for at any man's hands, in matters pertaining to a kingdom; and Euripides makes it in a

manner lawful for a kingdom's sake to transgress the limits of law, nature, and honesty. Which opinions I may justify by many examples, as of Numitor and Amulius, etc. who though they were natural brethren, yet Amulius, being the younger, deposed his elder brother from the Kingdom of Rome, slew his sons, and made his daughters Virgin Vestals, that they might not marry and have issue male to succeed the crown. Likewise of Romulus and Remus, who being brethren born at one birth, yet because Remus should enjoy no part of the kingdom, Romulus found means to make him away. The like is reported of Eteocles and Polynices, of Jugurth towards Hiempsal and Adherbal : all which were brethren, and by nature's laws most nearly linked together. But of others that by blood have not been so near, which in cases of Kingdoms have dealt far worse, the examples are in strangeness wonderful, in number infinite, and in success so sorrowful, that it maketh me cold at heart to consider of it. I spake not this, my Germanicus, to forespeak you ; you may enjoy the empire quietly, and so I trust you shall, but I know not what the matter is,—methinks my mind gives me some mischief will ensue thereof. Alas, good husband ! was it for my sake you sought the empire ? Do you

think I cannot be content with the estate which fortune shall assign to you? Yes! if it were to beg my bread from door to door, as Adalesia did with her Alerane, I could be contented therewith, so you were not tormented therewith! It is you, sweet husband, that are the riches which I seek to possess; you are the only honours which I look for; you are the only kingdom which I care for; for so long as I may enjoy you, come poverty, come mean estate, come sickness, yea, come death itself, so I may die between your arms! Therefore, good Master Germanicus, if you follow my counsel, resign your title to the Emperor again to bestow on some that hath more need of it than, thanks be given to God, we have. For, for my part I think myself endued with the greatest riches in the world, to wit, your person, and mine own contented mind. And besides the evils before rehearsed incident to a kingdom, this inconvenience is commonly incurred thereby, that it altereth the nature of the person which taketh that name upon him, for honours change manners, and no doubt the diversity of delights which a prince possesseth be but pricks to pleasure, enticements to folly, and allurements to lust! Was not Saul, I pray you, in the beginning of his

reign a good prince, but after declined to impiety ? Salomon began his reign godly, but afterwards gave himself a prey to women ! Caligula, Nero, and Hannibal began to reign like good princes, but after, the whole world was troubled with their tyranny ! I could allege infinite other examples to like purpose, but these shall suffice ; neither do I allege these for that I fear the change of your good nature, but to fear you from the change of your estate ; and yet the better I know your nature to be, the more cause have I to fear the alteration thereof. For freshest colours soonest fade, and ripest fruit are rifest rotten ! But to leave the lowering lots which light on high estate, which are more than I am able to rehearse, let this request take place with you, that seeing for my sake only you coveted the empire, at my suit only you will forgo it again."

"Ah, sweet wife," saith he, embracing her in his arms, "what is it under the Sun which you may not command me to do without desiring ? But I beseech you, suffer not the tender care you have of me to deprive you of the honour due to you ! For to cast the worst of it, though open enemies, or treacherous traitors, or rude rebels, shall set me besides my regal seat, and deprive me of life, yet shall you remain a

princess, and be matched again with some other more worthy your estate, and so long I care not what betide of myself."

"Alas! Sir," saith she, "I beseech you use no more of those words, unless you count my great grief your great good! Can I live when you are dead? Shall I be married again and you made away?" "Indeed," saith he, "I need not use such extreme doubts in a matter nothing dangerous; for the numbers are infinite of those who have wielded far more weighty empires than this without hazarding themselves any way, as the Emperor Octavian hath consumed the whole course of his life without peril, and Alexander being but five and thirty years of age took upon him the Monarchy of the whole world. Besides, if I should now refuse the Empire offered me, it were a sign of a base and ignoble mind, and the Emperor would think I made no account of his goodwill." "Well," saith she, "do as God shall put in your head; and of me make this account, that though you be the meanest man in the city, yet will I honour you as if you were the Emperor: and though you make me a Princess, yet will I be as obedient to you as if I were your handmaid." "Ah, good wife," saith he, "leave those terms of humility to

those that like them, or look for them, for for my part I have you in such reverent estimation, that I think the best state that ever I shall be able to bring you to, will be too base for your worthiness ; and if it shall please you to rest satisfied with the service I can do you, to remain content with the calling I can give you, to return lovingly the good-will which I will bear you, it is all that ever I will look for at your hands, and the only felicity I force of in this life."

"God forbid, Master Germanicus," saith she, "that I should either look for service of you, or mislike the lot which you shall allow me, or not restore with interest the good-will which you shall bear me. Yes ! persuade yourself this ; though you surmount me in all other things, yet will I not fail, if it be possible, to exceed you in good-will." Shortly upon this, the whirling wheel of Fortune turned their talk to tears, their words to wailing, their gladness to sadness, their happiness to heaviness, yea, their life to death ! For a certain thirst of the kingdom began to assault one Tiberius, a gentleman in the Emperor's court, who being of the blood royal, persuaded himself if Germanicus were made away with, the Emperor being dead, he should succeed in the empire. Which greedy desire of the

kingdom so blinded his understanding, that he passed not to pervert both human and divine laws for the accomplishing thereof; no rules of reason, no bond of friendship, no care of kindred, no fear of laws, no pricks of conscience, no respect of honesty, no regard of gods or men, could prohibit him from his pestiferous purpose. For if friendship had been of force with him, why, they were familiar friends! If kindred, why, they were near kinsmen! If laws, he knew his deed contrary to all laws! If conscience, he knew it terrible! If honesty, he knew it most wicked! If gods or men, he knew it abominable in the sight of both the one and the other! But too true it is, desire of a kingdom careth neither for kith nor kin, friend nor foe, God nor the devil, as by this traitorous tyrant may be plainly proved, who by poison procured the death of this worthy Gentleman, Germanicus, to the intent to enjoy the kingdom of Rome. Now Agrippina, seeing her sweet husband so suddenly dead, was surprised with such sudden sorrow, that for a long time she could neither speak word, neither let fall tear; but at length she cast herself upon the corpse of her Germanicus, kissing his cold cheeks, and embracing his breathless body, sighing and sobbing forth these words:—

"Alas! wretched wight that I am, whose misery is like to mine, whose grief so great, whose life so loathsome? No flowing tears, no griping groans, no careful cries, no throbbing sighs can sufficiently set forth my sorrows! My life, my love, my hope, my husband, my joy, my Germanicus is miserably murdered and made away! Ah! vain desire of worldly dignity, ah! devilish deed of bloody cruelty! But in vain it is to complain, when my care is without cure, and none can redress my wrong! For gods I know there are none, otherwise I know the good should not be so made away by the ill: and men there are none that can medicine my malady, and raise my Germanicus to life again: so that nothing resteth for me but by death to be rid of the most bitter pangs of death. I could prolong my life, and seek by some means to hasten the death of that tyrant Tiberius, but, alas! his death cannot bring Germanicus to life. No, let him live still on earth, where I doubt not but he shall ten thousand times in his time feel the force of death! For he will be so tormented with his own example, that, as the poets report of Suspicion, to be plunged in all the pits of hell will not be so painful unto him. Well! the gods, if there be any, give him as he hath de-

served, and give me leave to go to the ghost of my Germanicus." Hereupon she resolved with herself, that as her husband ended his life by receiving into his body that which he should not, so she would end her days by not receiving that which she should ; and so defrauding herself of food, distilling herself as it were into tears, pitifully pined away. And when the Emperor Octavian caused meat to be thrust in her throat, she cast it up again saying, sorrow was the only sustenance, and moan the meat, which she either could or would take ; and so in short time died.

I shall not need here, Gentlewomen, to exhort you take the death of your husbands when you shall be married, and when it shall happen, more patiently, for that I know your wisdoms to be such that you will not so wilfully work your own confusions ; neither do I think you are to know that we must live by the living, not by the dead, and that there hath been never any one husband so good, but there may be others found as good : yea, and though they be not perfectly so good, yet in respect of change, which most women delight in, they are commonly counted better : as yourselves, if you were once married, perchance would say, or at least think. But I think this needful to put you in mind, that

by the example of Agrippina you counsel your husbands to content themselves with their calling, not to soar too high, and fly above their feet, and with foolish Phaeton and youthful Icarus come to confusion. It is your parts also to weigh your husbands' wealth, and not to deck your heads and necks with gold when he hath none in his purse, not to swim in silks when he is drowned in debt, not to abound in bravery when he is pinched with poverty. For you know it is your part to take such part as he doth, whether it be poverty or riches, woe or wealth, pleasure or pain. But surely, in my fancy, that man is to be begged for a fool who will prefer his wife's pleasure before his own wealth, her vanity before his own ability. And as it is great incivility and churlishness in a man to deny his wife anything which is reasonable, so is it great imbecility and childishness to grant her anything which is unreasonable, and hereof cometh the utter undoing of a great number of young gentlemen. And as it is wise and loving carefulness to provide well for one's wife, so is it fond and doting curiousness to seek and provide better for her than he would do for himself; whereof came the confusion of this noble gentleman, Germanicus.

AMPHIARAUS AND ERIPHILE

AMPHIARAUS, a Gentleman Argive, sueth for marriage to Eriphile a widow, either liking other's possessions better than persons. Infortunio, burning in fond affection towards the same trull, seeing Amphiaraus's land preferred before his loyalty, is at point to destroy himself. Amphiaraus, hiding himself to escape from the wars, is betrayed by Eriphile for covetice of reward: and setting foot within the Theban soil, the earth openeth and swalloweth him up. Eriphile, oftsoon a widow, proffereth her love to her old suitor Infortunio, by whom being repulsed, in choler she consumeth away, and dieth.

The ancient philosophers are of this mind, that there is nothing that doth more argue and shew a base mind, than covetous desire of coin and riches, and nothing more sign of a noble heart, than not to desire wealth if one want it, and liberally to bestow

it if he have it. But I am of this mind, that nothing doth more argue a mad mind, than to desire goods which never did good, but which have been always the cause of all our calamities. What a world of men hath desire of wealth wasted in war! What huge heaps hath it drowned in the sea! What infinite numbers hath it caused physicians to kill! How many hath it driven divines to send to the devil? Of how many murders, thefts, slaughters, parricides, patricides, treasons, rebellions, perjuries, forgeries, adulteries, fornications, hath it been the cause? As Jupiter himself abused gold and pelf to abuse Danae that virgin! But you will say, though the desire of goods be detestable, yet the possession is profitable. Whereto I pray you? To maintain us in bravery, in gluttony, in venery, in security, in impunity, in pride, in prodigality! yea, to bring us to perdition and destruction, as King Midas wished that everything which he touched might be gold, whereby he was starved to death.

Fabricius, an ancient Roman, weighed wealth so little, that though he had been prince and consul of Rome three or four times, yet at his death he had not so much goods as might suffice to bring him honourably to his grave, but was fain to be buried at the

common charge of the city. But though the immoderate desire of riches be to be reprehended, yet must I needs say that moderately to account of them is not to be misliked, for they are given us by God to pass the pilgrimage of our life withal, and we may use them and yet not abuse them, we may make of them, and yet not make our gods of them. And as by duly desiring and truly using them, they convert to our commodity, so by greedy coveting and naughty consuming them, they turn to our trouble, care, and confusion ; as partly before hath been showed, and plainly hereafter by the history following is proved, which is this :—

In Greece, amongst the people called Argives, dwelt one Amphiaraus, who being a man of great possessions and wealth, heard of a widow in the same country of like living unto himself ; her name was Eriphile, and her nature was such, that she thought gain sweet, howsoever she got it. It fortuned this gentleman to come to her house to see and assay her in the way of marriage, and notwithstanding he had more liking to the living than will to the woman, yet he laboured his suit as earnestly, as if he had loved vehemently ; and at convenient time, commenced his suit in this sort :—

"Gentlewoman, I think it not needful to enter into terms in commendation of marriage, thereby to persuade you the sooner thereto, for that you know the dignity thereof, and have already tasted the pleasures and commodities belonging to the same; but this chiefly lieth me upon earnestly to persuade, and humbly to request at your hands, that when it shall be your good pleasure to enter into that life again, you will count me worthy, though altogether unworthy, to serve you instead of a steward, to order and dispose your things as your seemly self shall please to appoint, and to ease you of the trouble of travailing in your own affairs, which, I am sure, for that you have not been accustomed thereto, must needs much molest you. For it is not meet your young years should be tied to any trouble or travail, but to pass your time in pleasure according to your bringing up and calling, and according to the custom of your kind, and sex. And that you may not think my suit to proceed of any desire to your goods, yourself I think partly know, and by little enquiry may perfectly understand, that my lands and livings are sufficient to maintain the port and countenance of a Gentleman of worship: all which I willingly yield into your hands to be disposed at your pleasure, if it shall please you

to yield your body into my arms to be embraced at my pleasure; so that, in accepting my offer, you shall not only increase your substance, but also have a gentleman at your commandment, who shall make more account of you than of all the goods in the world." His talk ended, Eriphile smiling made him this smooth answer :—

"Sir, by how much more I know the inconveniences and infinite troubles mixed with marriage, by so much less do I like to enter into that estate again. And as I was once linked with one according to my liking, so look I not to be placed again with any, in whom I can take such pleasure. And as by holy oath I firmly bound my faith unto him, so in this mind I am in, only my death shall dissolve that bond; and the sour remembrance of my sweet husband's death, shall take away the renewing of all pleasures of life, and altogether mortify in me the mind to marry any more. For his love was so exceeding great towards me, that I fear to find the like at your hands, or any man's else. For where you profess to be my steward and servant, I am sure if you were once sure of that you seek for, you would think yourself good enough to be my Lord and master, and you would dispose my goods neither at my pleasure, neither to my profit,

but that which is mine should be yours, and yours your own. And where you pretend to prefer me before all worldly goods, I take it rather for words of course than talk of troth ; for as in the fairest rose is soonest found a canker, so in fairest speech is falsehood and feigning rifest. For I know the fashion of you men is by your subtlety to deceive our simplicity, and by a few filed words to bring us into a fool's paradise. Yea, you have set it down as a settled sentence amongst you, that he which knoweth not how to dissemble, knoweth not how to live. Therefore I yield no other faith to your words than their feigned falsehood deserves, nor no other consent to your request, than the small acquaintance you have with me may justly crave. But if hereafter in deeds I shall see as plain proof of perfect good-will, as your words import likelihood of earnest love, perchance I shall be as zealous to cast liking towards you, as now I am jealous to cast doubts of you."

By this time dinner was served in, whereupon their talk ceased, and presently after dinner the gentleman had occasion to depart. Now Eriphile being alone in her own house, began to discourse upon this matter by herself, and notwithstanding she had no great mind to the man, yet she felt in herself a great

lust to his lands, and thought herself more than happy if she might have them safely assured and made over unto her ; and in this thought, uttered words to this sense :—

"Why ! what though I cannot find in my heart to love and like him above all other ! Is it requisite that every marriage be grounded on love, as though we see not daily some to marry in respect of riches, some in respect of honours, some by constraint of friends, and some upon sundry other considerations : and for my part I count it sufficient to have married once of mere love ; and having lost him whom I did love entirely, I think it not lawful, or at least not possible, ever to love any again heartily. For true love ever decayeth, when the party truly beloved dieth. And, as my heart is hardened to take his death patiently, so will it not be mollified to suffer the love of any other to sink therein deeply ; like as the potter's clay being once hardened in the oven, will not be made soft again to receive the impression of any other form. But to speak my fancy freely, I see not how we women are bound to love our husbands so much ; we are only commanded to honour and obey them, which I count sufficient, and more than for my part mean to perform. Besides, that love consisteth in the heart ;

now it is our bodies only that are bound to our husbands, as by joining of hands before the congregation is plainly showed. But if I determine not to love him, how can I look for any love at his hands? Tush! that is the least matter amongst a hundred! So long as I may abound in bravery, ruffle in riches, and participate with his goods, I care not to communicate in love with him; I am too old now to live by love. And yet wherefore is woman's wit counted full of wiles, if I be not able so to dissemble the matter that he may think I love him deeply, though I hate him deadly. But if it should come to the worst, that he should perceive my dissembling towards him, and reward my cold kindness with heat of hate, why, I know the worst of it!

"So that all things considered, I see not how I can do better than to accept this gentleman's offer, whose large lands and revenues are able to supply all other wants whatsoever. For what disease is so desperate, which money may not medicine? What wound so deadly, which coin cannot cure? What life so loathsome, which goods cannot make gladsome?"

Shortly after this, there made repair unto her house a youth more wilful than wise, named Infortunio, who having seen her once or twice before, was so

bleared with her beauty that it dazzled his sight, and took away his foresight in all things; and coming to her presence, he preferred such lamentable suit, and ghostly resemblances unto her, that a rigorous repulse seemed sufficient to procure him a present death. The gentlewoman seeing the furious assaults of this fresh-water soldier, knew how to train him to the field of her falsehood, and to make him march under the ensign of a merciless mistress and cruel captain, and sometimes fed him with words of comfort, to put him in hope, and by and by feared him with doubts of denial, to drive him into despair. And as the north-east wind first gathereth up the clouds, and then by puffs putteth them abroad again, so she first by lovely looks allured to bring him in, and then with frowning face lowered to drive him away, the only end being to sport herself in his pain, yea, and if she could, of his good-will to make some gain. The poor gentleman perceiving these haggard tricks, and that assoon she would be welcoming to the lure, and by and by check at it and soar away, was so amazed thereat that he knew not what to resolve upon. And as a tree hewn round with axes ready to fall with a blow or twain, tottereth every way, being uncertain which way to fall, so his mind

distracted with doubtful devices, wavered unconstantly, now bending this way, now blowing that way, willing to retire his desire, but not able to set his fancy free. And notwithstanding her perverse dealing pitifully perplexed and terribly tormented him, yet he persuaded himself that as from most sharp thorns, to wit the rose tree, spring most sweet flowers, so from bitter annoy would come pleasant joy, and of his heavy suit happy success. "Tush," saith he, "the merchant often flieth the seas, though not sure to return with gain; the soldier often ventureth his body in the field, though not sure of booty; the husbandman still tilleth the ground, though not certain to save his seed: but yet hope of good hap carrieth all these to their enterprises; and why should not the same hope work the same effect with me? Yes, nothing venture nothing have! I will pursue my purpose whatsoever come of it!"

Now the gentlewoman, as I said, ceased not to bait him continually with courtly banquets, as dissembled favour, uncertain hope, courteous congés, amiable looks, and such like: but he, on the contrary, as one that meant truly, ceased not to feed her with fair words, with faithful promises, with earnest oaths, with many a rich jewel and costly gift, which she

willingly received without condition, and wilily kept without restitution. In this meanwhile, came the other wooer again to renew his suit afresh, and seeing this young gentleman, as he thought, in great favour, began greatly to fear his own part, and thought the grass had been cut from under his feet ; and as a cunning pilot seeing the seas rough and the wind contrary to his course, casteth anchor lest his ship be driven against the rocks, or into some coast contrary to his mind, so this gentleman, fearing lest wilful waves in the gentlewoman should set her fast in the sands of slipper subtlety, and dash his suit against the rocks of repulse, hauled in the main sheet of her mind, and by the anchors of advice so stayed her course, that no wind which any wilful youth could blow, could cause her anything to bow or waver : and by assuring to her a large jointure, he was chosen to rule her stern, where the other was kept still under the hatches. Who, all this while that they were concluding the contract, was in his chamber busily devising verses in the praise of his mistress : but hearing of the sorry success of his suit by a handmaid of the gentlewoman, he was so confounded in himself, that his invention was clean marred, and his device utterly dashed : yea, he was so far from writing that

he had not a word to say, or a thought to think. And surely in my judgment he reaped the right reward of his doating desire, for there only grafts of grief must needs grow, where such raw conceit doth set, and such rash consent doth sow. For neither was his love grounded upon virtue, wherewith she was not endued, neither upon beauty, wherewith she was not adorned. For neither can cruelty be cloaked under virtue, neither the treason of untruth covered under beauty, for the disposition of the mind followeth the constitution of the body, so that it was his own self-will and fond fancy that drew him into such depth of affection, and therefore with grief was fain to gather the fruits of his folly. And being come to himself he began to rage in this sort :—

"And is my true love thus triflingly accounted of? Shall he with his trash more prevail than I with my truth? And will she more respect gain than good-will? O iniquity of times, O corruption of manners, O wavering of women! Be these the fruits of thy fair looks? Is this the hap of the hope thou puttest me in? Is this the delight of the dalliance thou usedest with me? Herein truly thou mayst be fitly resembled to the cat, which playeth with the mouse, whom straight she meaneth to

slay : or to the panther, who with his gay colours and sweet smell, allureth other beasts unto him, and being within his reach, he ravenously devoureth them. But if I should set thee forth in thy colours, I think the savage beasts would be loth to be likened unto thee : for cruelty thou mayst compare with Anaxarete, who suffered Iphis to hang himself for her sake : for inconstancy, with Cressid, who forsook her trusty Troilus : for pride, with Angelica, who contemned all men : for treason, with Helen, who ran away with Paris from her husband Menelaus. But what rashness is this in me to rage and rail against her, whereas it is love, and the destinies, that have decreed my destruction ! For marriages are guided by destiny, and God hath endued women with this property, to be wedded to their wills. Neither doth love learn of force the knots to knit, she serves but those which feel sweet fancies fit : for as streams can not be made to run against their course, so unwilling love with tears nor truth cannot be won. So that this only choice is left for me, either to die desperately, or to live loathsomely. And as the bird enclosed in cage, the cage door being set open, and the hawk her enemy sitting without watching for her, between death and prison piteously oppressed standeth

in doubt whether it be better still to remain in prison, or to go forth to be a prey for the hawk, so stand I in doubt whether it be better by losing life to get liberty, or by living to become thrall and bond, and live in continual torment and vexation of mind. For love hath taken so deep root in me, that neither reason can rule, neither wisdom wield my witched will. But as the biting of a mad dog rageth and rankleth until it have brought the body bitten to bane, so the poison of love is so spread into every part of me that it will undoubtedly bring me to death and destruction. O cruel Captain Cupid ! is this the pay thou givest thy soldiers ? O vain Venus ! is this the victory thou vouchsafest thy champions ? Wouldst thou have been content thy darling Adon should rigorously have rejected thee, when thou wert furiously enflamed with his love ? But the parish priest forgetteth that ever he was clerk, and those that be in happiness themselves, weigh not the heaviness of other. Yea, perchance thou favour the falsehood of this woman the rather, for that thou thyself playedst the false harlot with thy husband Vulcan, the smith, and madest him a forked tool more than before he had in his shop : but remember yet how he took thee and the adulterer

Mars tardy in your treachery and lechery together stark naked in an iron net, and then called all the gods to take view of your vicious conversation, to thy utter shame and confusion. And so it may fall out that this, your pupil, may so long delight in deceit, that she may be taken in the net which she layeth to entangle other. But what mean I to blaspheme against the gods who do but punish me justly! for loving so lightly, and only mine own careless fault, is the cause of this cureless fate. Wherefore, O death! to thee I make earnest request, that thou wilt speedily send Atropos unto me, to cut insunder the twist of my troublesome life: and seeing my love doth loath me, good death, do thou desire me! I know thou sentest out process for me even in my swathe-clouts, and now I beseech thee serve it on me, when I am most willing and ready to appear before thy presence." While this forlorn gentleman continued in these careful contemplations, the marriage was consummated between the widow and Amphiaraus, who lived quietly together about a year or two, she shewing a presential obedience towards him, and he bearing an ordinary affection towards her: but in short time it pleased God to give occasion to try the treachery of the one, and to work the destruction

of the other. For it fell so out that Adrastus, King of the Argives, was upon urgent causes moved to infer war upon the Thebans, and in mustering his men he thought Amphiaraus a meet man to make one of his captains, and wished him to prepare himself for that voyage; who being well seen in astronomy and other secret sciences, knew if he went to the wars he should not return alive; for which cause he covertly hid himself in his own house, making only his wife privy thereto. Now the king taking muster of his men, missed Amphiaraus, and knowing the cause of his absence, was in great rage, saying he would he had no such cowards in his kingdom, and promised great rewards to them that could bring tidings of him. Eriphile, having intelligence of this rich reward promised, was marvellously set on fire in the desire thereof: and notwithstanding she was plentifully endued with riches, yet was she in desire as greedy as if she had been in estate most needy: and as dropsy patients drink and still be dry, neither is any liquor able to allay their thirst, yea, the more they drink the more they desire it, so she continually heaped in wealth, and yet was never satisfied: yea, the more she had, the more she desired to have. And being possessed with this loathsome lust of

lucre, she entered into reasoning with herself in this sort :—

"Who, unless they be out of their wits, will refuse offered gold ? No ! the savour of gain is sweet of what thing soever it be gotten ! Why, Tarpeia, a Roman maid, did betray the tower of Rome for a few bracelets to the Sabines that laid siege to the city, and shall not I for great ouches of gold bewray my husband to the king, who meaneth by his means to preserve our city ? For if it come to the worst, that he never come home again, why, I know the worst of it. Two or three days weeping will wash away all woe and sorrow, and then shall I be lady of his lands and livings, and be married again to some that perchance shall better content me every way than he doth : and who is so foolish that will not be content to change for the better ?" And in this good mind gat to the king, and told him, that preferring the safety of his person, and the profit of the commonwealth before her own private pleasure, she was constrained to detect her loyal mate unto his royal majesty, which her deed she humbly desired him to conceal, and notwithstanding the absence of her loving husband would greatly annoy her, yet the commodity of her country, which she hoped through her husband's help should

be procured, would as greatly joy her. And that she might safely see her sweet husband again, with a few feigned tears forcibly wrung forth, she humbly requested the king that he might be placed in such part of the battle that he might not be subject to the shot, and lie open to the army of the adversary. The king, plainly certified by her of the den wherein the forenamed was hidden, giving her the promised reward, went forthwith to unkennel him; who hearing of the king's coming, and by what means he was discovered, fell to raging against his wife, and other like women for her sake, in this sort:—

"Ah! fond fool that I was, to repose any trust or confidence in women, whose sex is subtle, whose kind is cruel, who are constant only in unconstancy, who are witty only in wiles, who, as Aristotle saith, are monsters in nature, altogether imperfect, weak vessels, ignorant in all things, yea, which we may most lament, they are naturally endued with baits to allure men, with poison to infect men, and with charms to change men from men to beasts, as Circe did the servants of Ulysses: yea, what man hath ever been so wise but by woman hath been seduced to folly! as Pharo his daughter caused Solomon to fall to idolatry! What man hath ever been so

godly, but by woman hath been depraved ; as Bersabe drove King David to devilishness ! What man hath ever been so strong, who by woman hath not been made to stoop ; as Dalila took away the force of Sampson by cutting away his hair ! Who hath ever been so perfect, but by woman hath been drawn to imperfection ; as Adam by the means of Eve lost the perfection of Paradise ! Who hath ever been so faithful, but that women have enforced them to infidelity ; as a handmaid made Peter deny his master Christ ! Who so valiant, but by woman hath been vanquished ; as Omphale made Hercules serve her, and spin amongst her maids ; and after by Deianira was done to death ! Who so learned, but by woman hath been taught new points of school ; as Tully by Terentia, Marcus Aurelius by Faustina, and Ovid by Corinna, were often abused ! with infinite others. But if the wise, the godly, the strong, the perfect, the faithful, the valiant, the learned, have been bewitched, beguiled, and abused by women, is it reason I should challenge any proper or peculiar fortune to myself, and not remain content with the lot which is common to all ? Yes, I am content my rage in rule to bind, but notwithstanding the comfort by other men's calamity be miserable, yet it doth me

good to think that other have been as sluttishly served by women as myself; as Tulla conspired the death of her own husband Tarquinius, then of her sister, and lastly married the brother of her own husband, who before was husband to her own sister: as the fifty daughters of Danae all but one slew their husbands the first night of their marriage: as Candaules, by the counsel of his wife, was slain by Gyges, who afterwards married her: as Dionysius, notwithstanding his wary watch and watchful wariness for the preservation of his life, was by his own wife Aristomacha miserably made away."

By this time the King was come into his house; whereupon he was driven with shame to shew and present himself to his Majesty, humbly craving pardon for his offence; and seeing no remedy, made preparation for the wars, disposing his living so well as the shortness of time would give him leave, and dispossessing his wife of so much as he could possibly. Which done, amongst the rest he mournfully marched forward, but he no sooner set foot in the Theban soil, but that the earth opened and swallowed him up. Of which news so soon as his wife was partaker, for fashion-sake she put finger in the eye, and attired herself in mourning apparel; but she quickly cast it

off again, and began to cast in her head how she might be sped of any other husband. And calling to mind the deep affection wherein Don Infortunio was drowned towards her, she thought none more fit to make a fool of than him, and therefore by letters did him to understand, that considering his former good-will towards her, she thought herself bound in conscience to countervail his courtesy by any convenient mean she might ; and in that before-time she set so light by his love, the cause was for that before his coming she had betrothed herself to Amphiaraus, so that as then she was not able to yield him the meed of his merit ; but now if his affection were not altered, and if he were disposed to deal with her by order of honesty and limits of law, he might be paid his due debt with double interest. Now the young gentleman by the aid of absence, by the assistance of time, by the change of diet, by remembrance of his repulse, by dregs of disdain, by the virtue of necessity, and by the help of reason, being fully cured of his folly, having heard also of the treachery which she used towards her other husband, rejected her offer, returning her answer, that being at liberty, he meant not to come in bonds, and being now set free from her fraud and falsehood, he would no more be trained

to her treason. Neither (saith he) doth that hold or castle merit mercy, which yields rather for want of fresh supply, than at the suit of the besieger. Neither is the prisoner to be pitied, who being judge, joyed only in severity and cruelty. Neither is that client's cause to be considered, who being a councillor, dealt in the cases of other without conscience. The gentlewoman seeing herself thus reproachfully repulsed, in very choleric conceits consumed away, and died.

I am here, Gentlewomen, to admonish you not to suffer yourselves to be carried away with covetousness. You see to what miserable end it brought this married disloyal couple. And as well for your sakes as mine own I would wish you, who are endued with wealth sufficient to make a man, as they say, and who are at your own disposition and choice, not to yield yourselves as a prey to any who hath no need of your wealth, neither will gratefully accept your goods, but rather frankly to bequeath yourselves to some poor younger brother, who may think himself made by marrying you; who may thank his wife only for his wealth; who may impute his happiness only to having you; whom you may bind to you by benefits; who will no doubt endeavour to counter-

poise your living with his love, and your goods with his good-will ; who will rather serve you than seek superiority over you ; who will rather be your man than your master ; your liege than your lord ; your subject than your sovereign ; whereby you shall live as you list, your profits shall pleasure you, your goods shall do you good. And whatsoever be your common saying, that you must as well love to live as live to love, yet surely in my fancy I think it far better for a married couple to live together without living, than without love. For what little living will suffice nature, who knoweth not, but what loathed lives be where love doth lack. Look but unto the lives of the parties but now reported unto you. And if you credit not my report of them, no more but mark your poor neighbours how quietly and merrily they pass their time in poverty, assisted only by the calm of contentment and love ; and then convert your eyes to the view of many other estates, and look how unpleasantly and uncontentedly they spend their days, molested by the storms of strife, debate, and hate. Which contemplation I hope will so confirm your judgments, that you will always prefer love before living ; or at least not so to respect the one, as to neglect the other. Another thing also the

death of Eriphile may drive into your minds, that you rage not like tyrants over those whom your beauty hath made your bondslaves; for you must know that it is more glory to use the victory moderately, than to get it mightily; and far more holds have been won by clemency, than by cruelty. For when the inhabitants know the captain's courtesy, they will rather yield to his assured mercy, than stand to the doubtful event of battle. So, Gentlewomen, if you mind to make breach into the hearts of many, and to win the fort of their faiths unto you, if you crave to conquer the good-wills, and to be courted with the service of suitors, you must with modesty make much of them, with courtesy countervail their kindness, with gratefulness accept their good-will, with liberality requite their love, and with honest plainness answer to their demands. You must not feed them with falsehood, draw them on with delay, and torment them with trifling as Eriphile did her Infortunio, to her own unfortunate hap, as it luckily afterwards did light. For it is God's word and will that such measure as is met shall be measured again, and they that delight to drown other in dolour, shall not swim long in pleasure themselves. I know not what effect my words will

take, for that I know not how you courtly dames account of my cunning, but before mine own face I am able to assure you this, that the girls of our parish think that Welsh Sir Richard himself cannot make a better preach than I can. But it may be, you will think me over saucy with my lisping lips to prefer persuasions to them, who are as void of folly every way as myself of wit any way. Yet considering how quietly you took the rude railing of Amphiaraus against you, I need not doubt but that you will take in good part words which are well meant towards you, and if not follow them, yet not mislike them, and rather weigh the will of the speaker, than the worth of the words.

ICILIUS AND VIRGINIA

ICILIUS, a young gentleman of Rome, falling in love with Virginia, is refused by her friends for want of sufficient wealth, but privily contracteth himself unto her, and departeth unto the wars. Appius Claudius burning with unchaste lust of the same maiden, the better to obtain her causeth Clodius, his client, to claim her for his bond slave, and giveth wrongful judgment on his side. But Virginius, her father, at her earnest request, slayeth her with his own hands to preserve her virginity from the villainy of Appius, who for that fact is cast into prison, where desperately he doth himself to death.

It is a doubt often debated but not yet decided, whether love descendeth from the heavens, deriveth of our own nature, proceedeth of the similitude of manners, cometh of acquaintance and familiarity, taketh original of our education and bringing up

together ! Whether it ariseth of beauty or of virtue, whether it entereth in at the eyes, or first be rooted in the heart, whether the cause come from the party that loveth or the party loved, or whether it be in our power to love or to leave, I leave to other to resolve upon. For my part, I yield God thanks for it, I have as yet been so little troubled with love, that I know not what it is, nor from whence it cometh ; and when I muse thereon, I am as bad troubled as Simonides was to think and say what God was. But if an opinion grounded upon reason without any proper experience on mine own part may take place, I think love chiefly to be grounded upon the similitude of manners showed and signified by familiarity and abode together. For it is daily seen, that those parties who at the first encounter and view rather disliked than loved each other, by continuance of conversation, and by conferring each other's condition and nature together, have fallen into the fire of most fervent affection. For true love and faithful friendship is to will and to nill one thing, to have one object of appetite, and to have like effect of affection. I know there are infinite instances to be given to this assertion, for that some have been surprised with love only upon a loving look, some upon

a courteous word, some upon a single sight, some upon a vain vision, some upon a doubtful dream, some upon an uncertain report, and some some other way. But as one swallow makes not summer, so one particularity concludeth no generality. And as an Ethiopian is said generally to be black though his teeth be white, for that for the most parts of him he is black, so I think love may be said generally to proceed of the similitude of manners, for that for the most part it doth so. And besides infinite other examples which I can allege for proof hereof, the history which you shall presently hear shall also confirm it.

In the renowned city of Rome made his abode one Icilius, who though he were a gentleman of a worshipful house, yet by reason that his parents were yet living, his patrimony was not great, neither his living more than might suffice to maintain the port of the place and countenance he carried in the city; by reason whereof he remained unmarried, as being not able to maintain a wife according to the estate of his calling. It was his chance, amongst other youthful company, to pass the time for the space of a sennight in feasting and making merry at the house of one L. Virginius, a worshipful gentleman of the

same city, who had to daughter a damsel named Virginia, who as she was of ripe years, so was she of ripe judgment and discretion in every point belonging to a virtuous virgin and modest maid. Her shape, though it were not precise, yet was it perfect ; her face, though it were not blazing, yet was it beautiful ; her corps, though it were not curious, yet was it comely. And as nature plentifully planted perfection in her, so God superabundantly bestowed his benefits upon her ; such gravity in gesture, such modesty in manners, such courtesy in conversation, such troth in talk, such wit in reasoning, that Minerva herself could not have mended her, that it was doubtful whether men were more rapt into admiration of her wisdom, or ravished in contemplation of her beauty; the one containing contentment of the body, the other solace and delight for the mind. Now Icilius, being in the company and society of this saint, used little other behaviour towards her above his common regard to all the gentlewomen of the troop, but spent his time in dancing, dicing, carding, and other such pastimes. And notwithstanding this while he often felt a certain restraint of liberty in his affections, an alteration of mind, and, as it were, a civil assault and discord within himself, yet by reason of his young

years and small practise in the pangs of love, he could not conjecture the cause of his sudden passions ; but this made him most to muse, that when he was in his most dumps, if she chanced to present herself to his presence, his heart was presently lightened of that which lay so heavy in his stomach ; and as when the sun shineth the clouds vanish away, so when her beauty blazed in place, the clouds of care were clear consumed. Likewise, being often desirous to talk with her, and enjoy the present pleasure of her pleasant speech, his senses were so ravished with the sight of her, that he could not utter one word unto her. Sitting also at the table with her and casting a gazing glance round about him, his sight was never satisfied until he had lent her a look, and seemed only to resolve his fancy upon her face. But notwithstanding all this, he did not thoroughly perceive the cause of his sudden trouble of mind, and thought it as it was a toy lightly taken so would it be lightly left again, and therefore departed from her father's house without preferring any suit unto her, or adding execution to the advantage of the time and place. But being gone home, and gotten solitarily to his chamber, good God ! what mountains of smoke did scalding sighs send forth of his mouth;

what drops of blood did galding grief make his heart to bleed; what floods of tears did flow from his eyes, what careful complaints did he send unto the skies! saying, "O heavens, why heap you my heaviness? O planets, why plant you my pain? O destinies, why decree ye my destruction? O gods, why deprive you me of liberty, now my young years challenge to live most freely? O fortune, why dost thou mix my sweet meat with such sour sauce that is more bitter than gall, and no less pleasant than death unto me? Must the little delight which I took in the company of Virginia, whereof I fully understood not her to be the cause neither, be countervailed with such direful despite? and for the pleasure which her presence procured me, must her absence purchase me such displeasure? Then too true do I find that every dram of delight hath a pound of spite, and every inch of joy, an ell of annoy annexed unto it! Then well may I curse the chance, the cause, and the company, which caused me to come to that place, which hath caught me in such bondage! And may I term it bondage to live in the service and contemplation of my Virginia? Is it slavery to be thrall to virtue? It is her bounty, not her beauty, that bindeth me; it is her courtesy, not her comeliness that

I care for; it is her perfection, not her person that I pass of; it is her conditions, not her colour that I account of: for beauty bideth not, comeliness continueth not, personage perisheth, colour fadeth, but bounty, courtesy, perfection, and conditions remain for ever. So that if I live in bondage, it is to virtue; if I be a slave, I am virtue's slave. But doth virtue use to torment men thus! Belike that is the cause there are so few honest and virtuous! No! I ought not to count my trouble a torment, but the fine gold must be purified in the flaming fire, and white silver is wrought in black pitch: glory must be gotten through depth of danger, and pleasure must be purchased with the price of pain. And though absence now be some torment to try me, and though dolour now drown me in the seas of sorrow, yet doubt I not but shortly to swim in the floods of felicity, and take land there where my heart hath already pitched his abode. But oh! presumptuous fool, whither doth folly force me? Do I hope to win her whom my unworthiness willeth me not so much as to wish for? Yea, which way soever I go to work, I am sure to have a cold suit of it: for if I proffer her my service dishonestly, why her virtue abhorreth it: if I make love in way of

marriage, her estate and riches refuseth it. O God! and shall goods be more accounted of than goodwill? lucre more than love? Is the counsel of Themistocles altogether rejected, who willeth men rather to marry their daughters to a man that wanteth money, than to money that wanteth a man to use it? Is the world so blinded in covetousness to prefer living before learning, wealth before wit? Then farewell true friendship, if it be not grounded upon love; then farewell true love, if marriage be not the end of it; then farewell true marriage, if money make it! Then resteth for me only to bewail my evil hap, to lament my luckless love, and never to attempt that I am like never to attain unto."

By this time the earth was covered with a dark mantle, and by reason that the sun was departed out of our horizon, the light of the stars which the sun lendeth them, began to appear in the firmament; whereupon this poor passionate lover wearied with woe, disposed himself to rest; but he whose bane love hath brewed, neither by night nor by day, neither in company nor solitary, neither sleeping nor waking, can take any rest or quiet. For he was no sooner in a slumber but the goddess of his devotions presently presented herself before him, saying: "Mine

own, why dost thou thus torment thyself for my sake, who suffer no little grief to see thy great sorrow? Wherefore behold to ask anything at my hands honestly, and be sure I will grant it willingly, for I persuade myself the heavens have reserved me for thee." Icilius hearing, as he hoped, this heavenly voice, and seeing, as he thought, that saint by his bedside, with open arms reached to embrace her, but being awaked, with open eyes he saw he was deceived: which sudden fall from heaven to hell took away his breath from him for a while, but being come to himself he began to cry out in this careful manner :—

"O God! is it not sufficient to vex me with vanities in the daytime, unless thou torment me with visions also in the night? Have I not woe enough awake, but that besides I must have sorrow in sleep? What grievous offence have I committed, that deserveth such grievous punishment? If this be the reward of them that love, woe! woe be to them that hate! Thou hast commanded us all to love one another, and if thou thus punish the fulfillers of thy law, what shall become of the transgressors thereof? But if thou be disposed to punish me, and displeased with my deeds, never suffer me hereafter to do anything but

cast me into such a sleep wherein I was erewhile, and therein let me continue continually. O happy was Endymion, who long time enjoyed the like sleep! O ten times happy are the dead, if death be anything like this sleep! But O! hundred times unhappy am I, to whom waking is wailful, whereas to all things else it is joyful! But was this but a vision which deluded me? was it but a dream which I doated on? And if it were but a dream, doth it portend nothing? and may there be effect in dreams? Yea, God wot, commonly the contrary; or, as Caro saith, we see sleeping that which we wish for waking. So that neither in dreaming nor doing, neither in sleeping nor seeing, neither in thinking nor saying, find I any cause of comfort, or see any sign of solace." This youth passed his time so long in these and such-like passions, that the careful carriage of his eyes bewrayed his careful mind, and his pale countenance his painful case. Which a special friend of his perceiving, took such compassion and pity on his painful state, that he sought all means possible to sift out the cause of his sorrow, to the intent to seek some medicine for his malady. And having opportunity of time and place, he brake with him in this sort:—

"Good friend, if I should shew you what great

sorrow I sustain by your heaviness, you would perchance judge my words to proceed rather of flattery and trifling than of truth : but no more but try how willing I will be to ease your pain, and by that judge how greatly it grieveth me. But how great soever my grief be, my wonder is more than great to see you transformed from the estate of a pleasant gentleman into such solitary regards, that you seem rather a Timon of Athens, than a courtier of Italy ; and so much the more cause I have of marvel, by how much less I see any apparent cause which should work any such alteration in you. For if want of worldly wealth could work your woe, why you want nothing : if you would eat gold, as they say, you might have it. If loss of friends molest you, why you have an infinite number which love you entirely. If you be disposed to travel to see strange countries, your parents will be well pleased with your departure. If you be weary of your single life, your friends will forthwith provide for your marriage. If any repulse received of any dainty dame do daunt you, why the gods themselves have suffered the like : as Daphne, a silly damsel, refused the god Phœbus : Syrinx, a simple maid, rejected the god Pan ; with infinite other. If you have fixed your fancy in place you

think impossible to possess, why you have reason to rule your affections, you have wit to compass your desire, you have friends to further it, you want nothing to finish it." With this his colour began to change, and he fetched a deep sigh or two, whereby his friend perceived he had touched the cause of his calamity, and sore of his sorrow, praying him very earnestly to unfold the secrets of his thoughts unto him, saying, "Two wits are better than one, and that which you, blinded perchance by love, cannot see, I, stirred up by desire to do you good, may perceive. And for secrecy in your affairs, assure yourself that never Pythias to his Damon, Pylades to his Orestes, nor Gysippus to his Titus, was more true, than I will be to you. And though your learning and wit to know what is best for your own behalf be far better than mine, yet the simpleness of my wit shall be supplied with the sincereness of my will; which shall be always so ready pressed to pleasure you, that if my service may satisfy you, you shall command me, if my company may content you, I will never be out of your sight, if I may any way stand you in any stead, account me your own only."

Icilius, hearing this friendly discourse, could not

but say in his heart :—O friend unfeigned, O love most loyal, O courtesy incomparable. And embracing fast his friend in his arms, said :—

"If all the miseries in the world did muster in multitudes about me, yet this thing only is of force to fence me from their furies, to think I enjoy so firm a friend as yourself are, and if I may live but to requite some part of your good-will, it is the second felicity I look for in this life. But touching the cause of my perplexity, I must crave pardon if I make courtesy to disclose it, for that many evils carry this nature, rather to be concealed with grief, than revealed in hope of relief. And as a green wound by taking the air spreadeth further abroad and is the hardlier healed, so I think my torment and grief being once discovered, would not be so easily cured." "If," saith his friend, "the original of your evil proceed of love, as in my fancy it doth, then undoubtedly the more it is uncovered the sooner is it cured; for as coals of fire covered close with ashes keep their heat long time, but lying open soon wax cold and black, so the fiery flames of love raked up in silence, burn furiously within a man, but being by discourse disclosed, they soon convert from flame to fume and smoke.

Wherefore, good friend, stick not to impart unto me this matter which doth import you so near, promising you by the inviolable bond of friendship to travail so earnestly in your affairs, that what wanteth in power, you shall find in the pains which I will take in your cause." "Alas! sweet friend," saith Icilius, "rather than you should think I have any diffidence or distrust in you, or think you unworthy of credit in any cause whatsoever, I will make you privy to the cause of my pain, what pang or peril soever I incur thereby. Wherefore you shall understand, that since the time I was at the house of L. Virginius, as you partly know, the conditions of his daughter did so well content me, her nature agreed so well with mine, her affections were so framed to my fancy, that I am constrained to resign my liberty captive unto her, and to make her person the prison of my heart. And the less hope I have of obtaining her, the more do I love; and the more deeply I do desire her, the more deadly do I despair of her; which is the cause of all my care, and sum of all my sorrow; yea, this is it which hath made me an enemy to myself, a stranger to my friends, to abandon all good company, to sit in solitariness, and this is it which, if it be not in

time provided for, will prevent by death all other mischiefs." "God forbid! good friend," saith his friend, "that so light a cause should so deeply distress you. What, do you think either so superstitiously of her, either so abjectly of yourself, that you deem this matter so impossible to be brought to pass? Why, her person is not of such perfection, but that yours may match it: her friends are not of such state, but that yours may stand by them; her portion is not so great, but your parents are able to make yours equal unto it. No, doubt not but your love shall sort to lucky end, and have such success you seek for; and I am heartily glad, that seeing it was your chance to lose your liberty, it is lodged in such a place, which is rather to be counted a paradise of pleasure, than a prison of pain, of whose worthiness I would somewhat say, but that perchance you will think me partial to the party; and besides that, I should rather kindle new coals in you, than quench old flames. But because I persuade myself I may do somewhat with the party which putteth you to this pain, doubt not to commit this charge to me, and I warrant you I will discharge it to your contentation." "Ah, dear friend," saith Icilius, "if I thought you as well able

to give order to my sorrow and redress my woe, as I see you willing to comfort my carefulness and keep me from despair, I should think myself the happiest wight in the world, and I would account of you as the preserver of my life, but I cannot tell what the matter is; methinks the more fervent is my fire, the more faint is my fear." "Why," saith his friend, "you shew yourself too very a coward. Fortune, you know, favoureth not the fainthearted, neither are they worthy to win the prey you press for; and therefore for shame take a good heart unto you, and do your endeavour, and let me alone with the rest. There is no hawk soareth so high, but she will stoop to some prey, neither any so rammish and wild, but in time she may be reclaimed and made to the lure. And if you follow my advice, I think good you solicit her by letters until such time you have convenient time to go thither yourself." Which counsel he forthwith put in execution, and indited a letter to his mistress in this manner :—

"Good Mistress, to set forth in words the fervency of my affection, and vehemence of my passion, I think would be both tedious to you, and I am sure grievous to myself, for that the remembrance of

my passions would be as it were a renewing of my pain ; and though I altogether use silence therein, yet the loathsome life which I lead, may by report advertise you of my luckless love, and my drowsy looks to all which see them, are signs sufficient of my drooping heart. Therefore, may it please you plainly to understand, that being at Master Virginius your father's house, I received such contentation in your company and sight, that since I have been deprived thereof, I think myself deprived of all the pleasures of life ; and unless your courtesy surmount my deserts, and that you vouchsafe to pity my painful estate, I shall have just cause to say, that at your father's I received instead of meat misery, for drink dolour ; yea, I may count my fare fire, and my cheer very dear, which must cost me no less than the loss of my liberty at least. But if yet at the last course, it shall please you to send and serve on to the table of my troubled mind some confects of comfort with the fruits of friendship, I shall think myself to have fared most daintily, whereas otherwise I shall count myself entreated disdainfully. Look not, good Mistress, to my living, but to my love ; weigh not my wealth, but my will ; mark not my money, but my meaning in the way of honest

and lawful marriage; and speedily send the messenger of present consolation to him, which pineth away in pain, and is yours only and ever:

ICILIUS."

Virginia having viewed this letter, and liking it never the worse for his sake that sent it, replied unto it in this short and sober sort:—

"Sir, because I know in myself no such due desert any way, to drive you to such deep desire, I am the hardlier induced to believe your words; and though I adhibited full credit unto them, yet perchance as yet my fancy is not fully framed to like so well of you as you either desire or deserve; and though I could find in my heart to like you above all other, yet I know not whether my friends will yield their consent thereto. So that it is in me only to thank you for your good-will, but not to satisfy your request. Yours as she may: VIRGINIA."

This letter bringing some comfort to his careful mind, made him make haste to repair in person to the place of her presence, where he presented her his suit with such assured signs of perfect love and loyalty, that she thought with good conscience she

could not contemn his good-will. But her parents, for that he was not able, his father being alive, to make her such jointure as they enjoined him to, deferred the consummation of the marriage from time to time, hoping that time would mortify the affection of either the one or the other lover. But as the smith his forge, by casting on cold water, burneth more fiercely, so their love by these delays increased more vehemently, which caused them to betroth themselves each to other. But Icilius, endued with a courageous mind, perceiving the lack of living to hinder his happiness, determined to go to the wars, and by dint of sword to win either coin or credit, or to lose life and love. And being on point to take his journey, he gave his Mistress this farewell :—

"If ever woful creature had cause to complain his careful case, then undoubtedly may I duly press for the foremost place! The horse now and then ceaseth from his travail, the ass from bearing, the ox from drawing, and so of all other creatures; but my poor heart is never at rest, but as the wheel continually turneth, so my mind continually tosseth, still devising how I may aspire to the end of my desires, and be placed in full possession of your perfect person. And having revolved many ways

in my mind, I am now resolved upon this, to go to the wars, and there to win with prowess and pain, that which God and fortune have denied me; where the remembrance of your seemly self shall arm me with such courage, that I shall count nothing dangerous to attempt, or hard to attain. And whatsoever worthy feats you shall hear I shall enterprise, I shall desire you to persuade yourself that they are done for your sake. And if in my absence it shall please you to continue constant in good-will towards me, it is the only shield that shall shadow me in field and fight. Remember Penelope passed twenty years in the absence of her Ulysses, and assure yourself Ulysses never hazarded himself in more perils, than I will put myself to for your sake."

Virginia, having heard this short and sour discourse, casting herself into his arms, after she had bedewed his face with the tears which fell from her eyes, replied in this sort :—

"Ah, Master Icilius, my tongue is not able to tell the hurt which my heart sustaineth by the covetous cruelty of my parents, who in a greedy desire of goods, go about to stay me from that whereupon my life doth stay and depend! And were it not that your great courtesy and love towards me did somewhat

moderate and mitigate my martyrdom, I should never be able to bear the unsupportable burden thereof. But now I understand by you I shall lose your company, which was my only comfort and consolation, what resteth for me, but notwithstanding I was never married, yet to continue and lead a woful widow's loathsome life, and to spend my golden years in galding grief? I could rehearse unto you, and you yourself can better tell, the infinite and imminent perils which always wait on war, but that I doubt thereby I should rather increase your grief, than alter your determination. But this request at least, yea, and perchance the last, let me make unto you; that in war you be wary, in battle rather too backward than too bold, in field rather too flying than too forward, and if you take no care of yourself, yet make some spare of me. For persuade yourself this, out of every wound which your body shall receive, will issue as well my blood as yours. And for constancy in your absence, assure yourself Virginia will always be the vowed vassal of Icilius. And as the laurel or bay-tree ceaseth not to be green, notwithstanding the parching summer, and pinching winter, so will I never cease to be fresh in friendship, and green in good-will towards you, notwithstanding the sharp

storms of absence, the distance of place, and difference of time." But here tears stayed the talk of the one, and time took away any longer abode of the other, whereupon they were constrained after a few careful kisses, to give each other a fainting farewell. Neither is it easy to point forth the pain wherewith this parting pinched both these poor lovers; but surely, in my fancy, of all griefs it is most griping when friends are forced to part each from other, when one heart is placed in two places, when one member is torn as it were from another, when own's self is separated from himself, or at least his second self. But their parting was not so painful, but that shortly after their meeting was as mournful. For not long after the departure of Icilius, as Virginia walked abroad somewhat to recreate and solace her sorrowful self, it was her fortune unfortunately to be seen by one Appius Claudius, one of the Decemvirs, who were the chief rulers of the city, who by the furies of Hell was so set in fire in libidinous lust towards that virgin, that he sought all the means possible to win her to his wicked will; but seeing her so firmly fortified in virtue, to be by consent vanquished by villainy, he determined by force to force her to his filthiness. And as nothing is so impossible which

frantic fury will not enterprise, nothing so shameful which unbridled desire will not undertake, nothing so false which fleshly filthiness will not forge, so to bring his purpose to pass he coined this device : he caused one Marcus Clodius, a client of his, to lay claim to the maid as his bond slave ; who partly for awe of the tyrant, partly being apt of himself to undertake any evil, took the matter upon him, and the next time she took her out of her father's house, he laid hands upon her, commanding her to follow him home, to the end Appius might have had his pleasure of her. But by the pitiful exclamation of the maid and her nurse, a great multitude of people began to muster about them, who hearing whose daughter she was, and that she was betrothed to Icilius, thought it unseemly that in the absence of her father and friend, who were both in the wars, she should be violently carried in bondage, the title being not discussed by the laws, and thereupon withheld Marcus Clodius from having her away. Who seeing his might overmatched by the multitude, told them he meant not to deal by force, but his mind was, for the plain proof of his title and interest in her, to have her before the chief magistrate of the city, and only judge in civil controversies, who was

Appius Claudius, the only author of this evil. Being come before him, he told a solemn tale for the confirmation of his right in the maid, saying she was the daughter of a bondwoman of his, that in her infancy she was stolen from her mother, conveyed to Virginius, and from that time brought up at his house and taken for his natural child, and for proof hereof he brought in two or three knights of the post to depose. The friends of the maid, not able to refell this forged tale, desired of the Judas judge that the matter might be adjourned until the coming of her father Virginius; Appius answered that he thought it good the matter should hang in suspense until the return of her supposed father, but it was no reason but that he who pretended, yea, and had proved to have such right to her, should have her in his custody, until the matter were more examined, and upon his honour he promised she should be forthcoming to appear at the time of her father's approach. The people hearing this injurious judgment of Appius, rather murmured at it, than durst make resistance against it, by reason whereof Marcus Clodius began to draw the maid to be deflowered, as the tiger in Hyrcane woods haileth the lamb to be devoured. But God, the righter of all wrongs, and

protector of all pure virgins, prevented the peril which hung over her head, and sent home from the wars to succour her, her uncle Numitorius and her spouse Icilius, who hearing the heinousness of the matter, presently pressed to the place where Appius sat in judgment ; but he commanded his officers to keep Icilius back, whereupon Icilius inveighed against him in this sort :—

"Albeit, O Appius, by force you keep me from keeping mine own out of your hands, yet shall you not stay my tongue from detecting the villainy which you endeavour to do. For the truth is, this virgin is betrothed to me, and my mind is to marry her a chaste maid, therefore assure yourself if it lie in me to let, she shall not remain one minute of an hour out of her father's house. Is it not sufficient for you to deprive the people of the chief pillars of their liberty, but that our wives and children also must live in slavery to your tyranny ? Exercise your cruelty on our bodies, at least let chastity be in safety ! Ought princes to give light of life to their people, and will you make yourself a mirror of mischief to your posterity ? But if you mind to take her away from us by force, and from her, her virginity, never think to do it while I have any breath left in my body, for

in this just cause and quarrel of my wife, life shall sooner leave me than loyalty."

Appius, thinking the power of Icilius would prevail above his, for that the multitude marvellously inclined to his side, said he would have another time to repress the rebellious rage of Icilius, and touching the maid, for her father's sake he was content to defer the pronouncing of sentence against her, until the next court-day, that her father might be present. In the meanwhile, he would entreat Marcus Clodius to forbear his right, but if her father came not by the next court-day, he would defer the execution of justice for no man's pleasure. Presently upon this he despatched letters to the captain general of the army, that he should not in any wise dismiss Virginius, or suffer him to come home ; but Icilius had sent for him with such speed, that he had leave to depart before those letters came to the captain, so it pleased God to prevent the policy and wicked purpose of Appius. Now Virginius being come to Rome, went with his daughter to the judgment place, and did there lamentably implore the help of the people, saying :—"While I, with the rest of the soldiers, have hazarded our lives in the defence of you and your children, I am in danger to have

my own daughter despoiled; whereas by my help our city is preserved from enemies, I myself am brought to such misery, as if it were taken by our enemies, and utterly razed to the ground. For what greater villainy can be done to the vanquished, than to see before their eyes their wives and children deflowered and defiled? But, neighbours and friends, if you suffer me to sustain this injury, assure yourselves your staff standeth next to the door, and look no longer to be husbands over your wives, and parents over your children, than it shall please these tyrants to give you leave. Any evil at the first entering in of it may easily be avoided, but let one or two precedents pass patiently without resisting, and it will run into a custom, and from thence to a law, and you will never be able after to rid your hands of it. And if your own safety drive you not to succour me, yet let my old years, my hoary hairs, the honest port which I have ever maintained, and the chaste life of my daughter, move you to put to your hands to help redress my wrong." By this time Appius was come to the judgment-place with a great troop of armed men, and seeing Virginius there contrary to his expectation, and perceiving no colour of law could cloud his doings, he set down

his own will for a law, and said he would defraud Marcus Clodius no longer of his right, and seeing the maid was convicted by proof and witness to be his bondmaid, he gave sentence that he should presently have her away, not suffering her father to allege anything for her freedom. Virginius, seeing this extreme dealing of Appius, threateningly shook his hands at him, saying :—"I have betrothed my daughter to Icilius, not to thee, O Appius, and I have brought her up to be an honest married woman, not thy harlot. What, dost thou think under the pretence of bondage, to make her bound to thy beastliness?" Appius, not regarding his railing, caused his officers to make the multitude give place to Marcus Clodius that he might quietly carry away his bondmaid, by reason whereof Virginia was left void of help and rescue; which her father perceiving, and seeing himself not able to deliver her out of her enemies' hands, to defer the time, hoping still for help, he used this policy: he desired Appius he might have his daughter aside, and between her nurse and her examine the matter, that if it were found he were but her feigned father, he might the more willingly depart with her. Which being by Appius granted, they three went aside together, where Virginia fell

down upon her knees, and made this ruthless request unto her father :—

"I perceive, dear father, it is not without great cause that the philosophers were of this opinion, that the greatest felicity is never to be born, and the second soon to die. Now seeing by your means I am deprived of the first, I beseech you by your means let me enjoy the second, and to countervail the luckless and loathsome life which you have given me, vouchsafe to bestow on me an honourable death. And as by your fatherly care I have continued a continent virgin hitherto, so by your furthering aid, I pray you let me die an honest maid presently, lest my life hereafter contaminate the commendation of my life heretofore. And seeing I can be no longer suffered to live honestly, good father, let me die honourably; for an honourable death is always to be preferred before an infamous life : of evils the least is to be chosen, and death of body is to be counted a less evil, than destruction of body and soul. I think I may by more right crave your help herein, for that partly by your means I am fallen into this extremity, for that you would not agree to the consummation of the marriage between Icilius and me. And how you can deliver me, but by delivering me to death,

I see not, for that your power is too weak to wreak the wrong which is offered me, and your force is too feeble to fence me from the fury of my foes! Therefore, seeing he will needs have my body, sweet father, let him have it dead, that I may not feel the filthiness which he purposeth to force me to."

Her father melting into tears at her pitiful suit, carefully kissing her, commended her courageous mind, rather confirming her in her constant courageousness, than dissuading her from her purpose. By this time the tyrant's train began to flock about them to have her away, which Virginius seeing, snatched a butcher's knife from the shambles, and thrust therewith his daughter to the heart, saying :—

"O Daughter, by this only mean whereby I may do, I make thee free!" Icilius seeing his spouse thus spoilt, spent no time in trifling tears, but by the help of his father-in-law Virginius prosecuted the matter so earnestly against Appius that he was thrown into prison, where for shame of his deed and dread of deserved punishment, he did himself desperately to death. You see here, Gentlewomen, a most lamentable death of a most virtuous virgin, wherein you may note a noble mind in her to desire

it, a stout courage in her father to do it, and most outrageous tyranny in Appius to drive them to it: whereby you may learn that virtue and chastity is to be preferred before world or wealth, before friend or father, before love or living, before life or death. Therefore, if I were either in wit able, or otherwise worthy, to give you counsel, I would advise you to avoid the trains of such tyrants, to keep you out of the sight of such seedsuckers, and to fly from such *senes fornicatores:* such ravening wolves in sheep's clothing are readiest to devour such sweet sheep, such old dogs ever bite sorest, such gravity for the most part containeth most incontinency. For if their lust were not more than outrageous, either their great discretion would repress it, either their many years would mortify it, either their own wives would satisfy it. But use of evil maketh us think it no abuse, sins oft assayed are thought to be no sin, and these grayheaded gamesters have the habit of this mischief so deeply rooted in them, that concupiscence will fry their flesh, till breath do leave their bodies.

And as I would you should avoid these old youths in the way of wickedness, so if my wish might wield your wills, you should neither meddle with them in the way of marriage. For perfect love can never be

without equality ; there can be no good agreement of affections, where there is such difference of years. Can fire and water, can flowers and frost, can warmth and winter, can mirth and melancholy, agree together ? No, surely Gentlewomen ! but if you will have it so, I will believe this matter moveth you nothing. Yet what say you to another point, and that a most perilous point, when to impotency shall be added jealousy ? This is a pill of hard digestion, this is a pill which if it be a little chewed, it will be so bitter that you will never be able to abide it. For when such an one shall measure your deeds by his own desire, and your life present by his own life past, when he shall think you to be naught, because he himself hath been naught, good God ! how closely then will he mew you up ! how carefully will he look to you ! how loathsomely will he cloy you with his company ! Then will you wish you unmarried ; then will you wish you had married with a young man ; they will love and not dote ; they will be zealous and not jealous ; and if your parents in some curious or covetous respect go about otherwise to dispose of you, humbly request them you may choose where you like, and link where you love ; that you may be married to a man rather than money, to

quiet rather than coin. Dutifully tell them that such pressiness of parents brought Pyramus and Thisbe to a woful end, Romeo and Julietta to untimely death, and brave Virginius miserably to murder his own daughter Virginia.

ADMETUS AND ALCEST

ADMETUS, son to Atys, King of Lybia, falling in love with Alcest, daughter to Lycabas, King of Assur, who recompensed him with semblable affection, are restrained each from other by their parents, but being secretly married, wander in wildernesses like poor pilgrims. Atys shortly after dieth, whereof Admetus, being advertised, returneth with his wife, and is established in the kingdom. The destinies grant him a double date of life if he can find one to die for him, which Alcest herself performeth; for whose death Admetus most wofully lamenting, she was eftsoons by Proserpina restored to life, and lover again.

It is a saying no less common than commonly proved true, that marriages are guided by destiny, and amongst all the contracts which concern the life of man, I think they only be not in our own power or pleasure. Which may plainly appear by this, that

when the choice of such marriages doth chance unto us as we ourselves can wish, when they may, by their parents and friends, countenance us, by their dowry and portion profit us, by their person and beauty pleasure us, by their virtue and perfection every way place us in paradise, yet it is often seen that we set little by them, neither make any account of such profitable proffers, but by a contrary course of the heavens and destinies, are carried, as it were against our wills, some other way, and caused to settle in affection there where heaven and earth seem to withstand our desire, where friends frown on us, where wealth wants, where there is neither felicity in pursuing, neither felicity in possessing ; which the history which you shall hear shall more plainly set forth unto you.

There reigned in the land of Lybia one Atys, who had to his neighbour, more near than was necessary, one Lycabas, King of Assur ; which princes, rather coveting their neighbour's dominions, than contenting themselves with their own, encroached each one upon other's right, and continued continual war one against the other. But at length Atys, whether he were wearied and wasted with war, or whether he had occasion to bend his force some other way, or whether he were disposed to enter into league and

amity with his neighours, I know not, but he sent his one son Admetus to Lycabas to parley of a peace. Now Lycabas, either thinking he had him at some advantage, either not minding to put up injuries before received, would accept no conditions of peace, but by Admetus sent his father flat defiance. So that the war continued between them in as great rage as it had done the former time of their reign, but yet have caused not such hot skirmishes between the parents, but that love forced as fierce assaults between the children. For it was so that Lycabas had a daughter named Alcest, who what time Admetus was in her father's court to entreat of peace, chanced but at her chamber window to have a sight of him, and he at the same time happened to encounter a view of her. And as small drops of rain engender great floods, and as of little seeds grow great trees, so of this little look and sight grew such great love and delight, that death itself could not dissolve it. For as women be of delicate and fine metal, and therefore soon subject to love, so Alcest after this first sight was so overgone in good-will towards Admetus that she fixed her only felicity in framing in her fancy the form of his face, and printing in her heart the perfection of his person. And as nothing breedeth bane to the

body sooner than trouble of mind, so she persevered so long in such pensive passions, and careful cogitations, that her body was brought so low for lack of the use of sleep and meat, that she was fain to keep her bed ; and by reason that she covertly concealed her grief, it burned so furiously within her, that it had almost clean consumed her away. Her father, seeing her in this heavy case, assembled all the learned physicians he could learn of in the country, who, having seen her, were all altogether ignorant of her disease, and were at their wits' end what medicine to apply to her malady. Some thought it a consumption, some a burning fever, some a melancholy humour, some one thing, some another. And her father examining her how it held her, and what disease she thought it to be, she answered that it was a sickness which it pleased God to send her, and that it was not in the help of physic to heal her, but her health was only to be had at God's hands. Now Admetus, on the other side, having the proffer of many princes made him in the way of marriage, made very careless account thereof, and seemed in his mind to be very angry with those offers : and as the sight of meat is very loathsome to him whose stomach is ill, or hath already eaten his fill, so that little sight

which he had of Alcest had fed his fancy so full, that to see, or so much as think, of any other woman was most grievous unto him. And notwithstanding the griping pain of love caused some grafts of grief to begin to grow in his heart, yet by reason that he had the conducting of the army royal under his father, he was so busily occupied that he had no great leisure to lodge any loving thoughts within his breast. But see how the destinies dealt to drive this bargain through! There arose a quarrel between the two armies touching certain points wherein the law of arms was thought to be broken, to decide which controversy, Admetus was sent post to Lycabas, who sitting by his daughter's bedside, had word brought him that Admetus was come to the court to impart matters of importance unto him. Now, at this instant there chanced one of the physicians to hold Alcest by the arm and to feel her pulses, and where before they beat very feebly as if she had been ready to yield to the summons of death, she no sooner heard that message brought up to her father, but that her pulses began to beat with great force and liveliness; which the physician perceiving, persuaded himself he had found the cause of her calamity; but for more assured proof, he whispered the King in

the ear, desiring him that Admetus might be sent for thither, and there to make relation of his message unto him ; which the King caused to be done accordingly. Admetus was no sooner admitted into the chamber, but her pulses began to beat again with wonderful swiftness, and so continued all the while he was in the chamber. Who, seeing his love in such danger of her life, though he understood not the cause thereof, yet he cast such a careful countenance towards her, that she easily perceived he did participate in pain with her ; which made her cast such glances of good-will towards him, that he easily understood it was for his sake she sustained such sorrow and sickness. But the fears of her father, who was his mortal foe, and the urgent necessity of his affairs, forced him to depart without manifesting unto her the manifold good-will he bare her. And though his departure were little better than death to the damsel, yet for that she knew her love to be encountered with like affection, whereof before she stood in doubt, she began to drive away the dark clouds of despair, and to suffer the bright light of hope to shine upon her. Admetus being gone, the physician took the King aside, and told him his daughter's disease was not derived of any distemper-

ature of the body, but only of the disquietness of the mind : "And to tell you the truth plainly," saith he, "it is only the fervent affections she beareth to that young prince Admetus, your enemy, that forceth this feebleness and faintness in her." And told the King by what means he tried the truth thereof. The King at these words was marvellously disquieted, persuading himself that it was so indeed, and that Admetus on the other side, bare affection to his daughter, for that all the time of his talk with him, he continually turned his eyes towards her bed, and would oftentimes give his answers nothing pertinent to the questions which he proposed unto him, as having his cogitations conversant in other matters. Upon this the King went to his daughter, and as the physician first ministreth to his patient bitter pills and purgations to expel gross and ill humours, and then applieth lenitives and restoratives to breed and bring again good blood, so he first used sharp threatenings unto her to expel the force and fury of her love, and then used gentle persuasions to restore her to her former health, and quiet of mind. But neither the sourness of the one, neither the sweetness of the other, could prevail, for salves seldom help an overlong suffered sore ; it is too late to shut the stable

door when the steed is stolen ; it booteth not to stop the breach when the town is overflown ; it is too late to dislodge love out of one's breast, when it hath infected before every part of the body. For as swooning mortifieth every member, as pestilence infecteth every part, as poison pierceth every vein, so love, if it be not in time looked to, will bring both body and mind to utter confusion. For this virgin was so vanquished by love, that she neither forced her father's fair words, neither feared his fierce threatenings, but told him plainly she would not deny the love she bare Admetus, neither could cast out of her mind the liking she had conceived of him : and therefore humbly craved pardon, if, saith she, it be an offence to love him honestly, which deserveth it worthily. But her father in a fury flung from her, saying, she should never enjoy him with joy, and that she should never find any more fatherly furtherance at his hands, than the greatest enemy he had. The young princess, perceiving her father's good-will thus alienated from her, reposed her only comfort and confidence in Admetus, hoping that he would stand her instead of both a friend, fere, and father. And with as convenient speed as she could, wrought a letter to him to this end :—

"If, most peerless prince, necessity or love had law, I might be thought perchance to transgress the law and limits of modesty in first giving the onset, whereas I ought not easy to have yielded, being assaulted. But seeing necessity and lack of opportunity, by reason of the rigour of the wars, perchance causeth you to conceal that which you would discover, and vehement love and fervent desire forceth me to discover that which I should conceal, I think it less offence by this means to supply your want and satisfy mine own desire, than by standing upon the nice terms of my maiden's estate, to suffer both of us to pine away in pain for lack of being privy to each other's mind and purpose. Therefore you shall understand the cause of my writing is this. What time your good hap, I hope, was to be at my father's court, I did perceive, if desire to have it so did not deceive me, that your affection was great towards me, and that you seemed not a little to be pinched with my pain; to ease you of which grief I thought it my duty to certify you, that the certain hope which I thereby conceived of your love and good-will, did presently restore me to perfect health; and further to let you understand, that the only cause of my sickness was the first signs which I had of you, and the despair

that I should never be so fortunate as to obtain you. Now, as the same hand which did hurt me, did help me, so if I have any way wounded you, I shall be ready to make you what plaster it please you to heal your hurt. And judging the sincerity of your mind by the clearness of mine own conscience, I commit myself wholly unto your hands, presuming thus far of your perfect love towards me, that you will not any way seek the disparagement of mine honour, which I hold far more dear than love or life, but accept me for your lawful and loving spouse, and that way you only and at any time shall dispose of me at your pleasure. My father by ill-fortune hath found out our love, and stormeth greatly thereat, so that I think his haggard heart is by no means to be reclaimed. But I think indirect dealing by the daughter may be used, when the father by rage, rather than reason, is ruled. Therefore if you think so good, I will secretly convey myself to what place you will have me; but I commit this matter to your wisdom, and myself to you, remaining yours only and ever: ALCEST."

Now Admetus ever after his return from the Court of Lycabas, was driven into such doleful dumps, and

governed his charge of men with such heavy cheer, that his father examining him very strictly of the cause thereof, enforced him to confess his careful case. Which he no sooner heard, but he forthwith discharged him of his charge, saying he was fitter to be one of Cupid's carpet captains, than to march under the manly ensign of Mars, and that he would have no such lascivious knights in his army. For, saith he, if any part of the body be putrified, it must be cut off for fear of infecting the whole body. And told him plainly if he went forward with his folly, he would never take him for his son, neither should he ever succeed in the kingdom by his consent. The young prince withdrew himself out of his father's presence, and got him to his pavilion or tent, where he was no sooner sadly set down, but he was presented by a trusty messenger with the letter of Alcest, which so soon as he had read, he seemed to be rapt into the third heaven ; but considering on the other side the difficulty of reaping the fruits of his love, and weighing the peril of his father's displeasure, he was thrown into the deepest dungeon of hell. And as a boat borne by the tide against the wind, feeleth double force, and is compelled to yield both to wind and wave, so this young prince, being driven by the force

of love against the wind and pleasure of his father, felt double dolour, and was tormented with both. But at length love gat the victory, and all other doubts cast aside, he returned his mistress this answer :—

"Who was ever exalted to the highest degree of happiness, and driven to the deepest extremity of evil at once but I? whoever flourished in felicity, and faded in misery together but I? who was ever placed in paradise and plunged in perplexity jointly but I? for heaven itself cannot yield me better bliss than the consent of your good-will and love, most peerless prince and princely piece, and hell itself cannot yield me more bitter bale, than to be destitute of means to enjoy the fruits of your favour, and benefit of your beauty. If Crœsus came and offered me all his wealth, if Alexander yielded me his empire, if Juno came from heaven with her kingdoms, Pallas with her wisdom, or Venus with her Helen, assure thyself, sweet Mistress, that neither any one of them, neither all of them together, should be so gratefully or gladly received of me, as the proffer which your letters have made me. And canst thou, dear wench, prefer my love before thine own life, my pleasure before thy father's displeasure, my contentment before

thine own commodity, and shall any doubt of danger drive me from the duty which I ought to do unto thee? No, let father fret, let friends frown, let living be lost, let kingdom be made from me, let hap what hap will, thou hast promised to be mine, and I protest by the heavens to be thine! What though the King, your father, be greatly incensed against me, what care I for any man's friendship, if I have your favour? What though the way unto you be long and dangerous, what pass I to pass a thousand perils to pleasure you? What though mine enemies lie in wait for me, what weigh I to be hewn in an hundred pieces in your presence? Yea, if I had a thousand lives, I think the losing of them all little enough to requite the great good-will and courtesy you have shewed me! But methinks I hear you say, the spending or loss of my life is the greatest loss and evil that possibly can happen unto you, and therefore I must take heed how I hazard it. Well, I will, sweet wench, preserve my life only to serve thee, and the care I have of you, shall cause me to have care of myself. But touching the convey of our affairs, I am at my wits' end which way to work, for if your father chafe at this matter, mine rageth and stormeth, and watcheth me so narrowly that not so

much as my looks but he looketh to them. But I will ease him of this labour ere it be long, for this life I am not able to endure long : yea, I had rather live with you in most misery, if he may possibly be miserable that enjoyeth such a jewel as you are, than here in most happiness, which of me is not to be had without you. Therefore wayward fortune hath only left us this way, and if it please you so much to dishonour yourself, and to do me so much honour, as meet me the tenth of this month at the chapel of Diana, standing as you know five leagues from your father's court, I will there, God willing, meet you, and a priest with me to marry us ; which done we will shift ourselves into pilgrims' apparel, and so disguised endure together such fortune as the fates shall assign us. And thus till then I bid you farewell.

"Yours ever, or his own never : ADMETUS."

Now see the valiantness of a virgin, or rather consider the force of love which maketh the weak strong, the witless wise, the simple subtle, yea, and the most cowards most courageous. For the day prescribed in the letter of Admetus being come, the young princess before day attired herself in one of her page's apparel,

and trudged out of the city as if she had been sent to the camp on some message. And so fast as her faint legs, but strengthened by love, could carry her, she hasted through the desert and wayless woods to this forlorn chapel, where the god whom she only honoured was ready to receive her; who though at first he knew her not, but thought she had been Cupid or Mercury fallen from the heavens, yet at length by her loving looks cast upon him, he knew who it was, and embracing her fast in his arms said:— "If Jupiter, sweet wench, should see thee in this page's apparel, no doubt but he would forego his Ganymedes, and take thee up into heaven in his stead. O most sovereign Lady and mistress! what service shall I ever be able to do you, which may countervail this kindness? What duty can be a due recompense to this good-will? If I by any means can quite this courtesy, I never doubt to be deemed ungrateful while I live. But accept, good Lady, I beseech you that which is in me to perform, which is the faithfullest heart that ever was vowed to lady: which when it severeth from you, let all the torments of Tantalus, Tityus, Sisyphus, and all the rueful rout of hell, be heaped upon me!" Alcest hearing him so earnest said:—

"Few words, most worthy prince, are enough to win credit to a matter already believed; for only upon confidence of your constant and faithful heart towards me, I have thus inadvisedly adventured mine honour as you see, desiring you not sinisterly to think of this my attempt, being boldened thereto by the great love which I bear towards you, and by the loyalty which I look for of you towards me." "Ah," saith Admetus, "if I should make any ill interpretation of your virtuous love and sincere affection towards me, I were the veriest villain on earth; for I take God to witness, I take your forward will for such friendly good-will, that I doubt my deserts will never be able to answer thereto as I desire." But here he aptly ended his task upon her mouth, and they entered into such privy conference, their lips being joined most closely together, that I cannot report the meaning of it unto you; but if it please one of you to lean hitherward a little, I will shew you the manner of it. Now having continued some time therein, they at the length entered into the temple, where the marriage according to the sacred rites was solemnly celebrated; which done, they entered into a poor cottage, instead of a princely palace, joining to the temple, where long they durst not tarry for fear of apprehension by

posts which pursued them. Therefore putting on their pilgrims' apparel again, they went hand in hand, and heart in heart, wailfully and wilfully, wandering out of their own native country, to avoid their parents' punishment and displeasure. O, lamentable lots of love! which drave two princes from their pleasant palaces, from their flourishing friends, from their train of servants, from their sumptuous fare, from their gorgeous garments, from variety of delights, from secure quietness, yea, from heavenly happiness, to wild wilderness, to desert dens, to careful caves, to hard cheer with haws and hips, to pilgrim's pelts, to peril of spoiling, to danger of devouring, to misery of mind, to affliction of body, yea, to hellish heaviness! O pitiless parents! to prefer their own hate before their children's love; their own displeasures before their children's pleasure; to forget that themselves were once young and subject to love; to measure the fiery flames of youth, by the dead coals of age; to govern their children by their own lust which now is, not which was in times past; to seek to alter their natural affection from their children upon so light a cause, shewing themselves rebels to nature; to endeavour to undo the destinies and disappoint the appointment of the gods, shewing

themselves traitors to the gods. But the one of them, the father of Admetus, reaped the just reward of his rigour. For Atys, after the departure of his son, took the matter very heavily, abandoned all pleasures, avoided all company, and spent most part of his time in discoursing with himself in this sorrowful sort :—

"If nature, by the divine providence of God, did not move us to the maintenance of mankind, surely the charge of children is such a heavy burden that it would fear men from entering into the holy state of matrimony. For to omit the inconveniences of their infancy, which are infinite, when they draw once to man's estate, what time they should be a stay to our staggering state, good God ! what troubles do they torment us with ! What cares do they consume us with ! What annoys do they afflict our old years withal ! They say we are renewed and revived, as it were, in our offspring, but we may say we die daily in thinking of the desperate deeds of our children. And as the spider feeleth if her web be pricked but with the point of a pin, so if our child be touched but with the least trouble that is, we feel the force of it to pierce us to the heart. But how well this tender care is by them considered ! Alas, it maketh my heart

bleed to think if we look for obedience of them, and that they should follow our counsel in the convey of their affairs, why they think we dote, and that their own wits are far better than ours ; if we warn them to be wary and thrifty, they think it proceedeth rather of covetousness than of kindness ; if we provide them no marriages, it is because we will depart with no living to them ; if we persuade them to marriage, it is because we would have them forsake all good fellowship, and live like clowns in the country by the plough tail ; if we persuade them to learning, it is that they might live by it without our charge ; if we persuade them to one wife rather than another, it is because the one is richer than the other ; if we look severely on them, we love them not ; if we use them familiarly, we feed them with flattery because we will give them little. And so of all our loving doings they make these lewd devices : yea, when we have brought them up with great care and cost, when we have travelled all our time by sea and by land, early and late, in pain and in peril, to heap up treasure for them, when we have by continual toil shortened our own lives to lengthen and enlarge their livings and possessions, yet if we suffer them not to roist and to

riot, to spill and to spoil, to swash and to lash, to lend and to spend, yea, and to follow the fury of their own frantic fancies in all things, this forsooth is our recompense, they wish an end of our lives to have our livings. Alas, a lamentable case, why hath not nature caused love to ascend as well as descend? Why hath she endued the Stork with this property to feed his dam, when she is old, and men with such malice to wish their parents' death when they are aged? But I speak perchance of mine own proper grief, God forbid it should be a common case; for my son, ah, why do I call him son! hath not only wished my death, but wrought it! He knew he was my only delight; he knew I could not live he being out of my sight; he knew his desperate disobedience would drive me to a desperate death! And could he so much dote of a light damsel, to force so little of his loving father? Alas! a wife is to be preferred before father and friend! But had he none to fix his fancy on but the daughter of my most furious foe? Alas, love hath no respect of persons! Yet was not my good-will and consent to be craved therein? Alas, he saw no possibility to obtain it. But now, alas, I would grant my good-will, but now, alas, it is too late! his fear of my fury is too great ever to be found, his fault is too

great ever to look me in the face more, and my sorrow is too great ever to be salved."

And thereupon got him to bed, and in five days' space his natural moisture with secret sorrow was so soaken away, that he could no longer continue his careful life, but yielded willingly to desired death! So it pleased God to provide for the poor pilgrims, who having passed many a fearful forest and dangerous desert, were now come to the sea-shore, minding to take ship and travel into unknown coasts, where they might not by any means be known. And being on shipboard, they heard the master of the ship make report that Atys, King of the Lybians, was dead. Whereupon Admetus desired to be set on shore again, and dissembling the cause thereof, pretended some other matter, and got to the next town, where with the money and jewels he had about him, he furnished himself and his lady with the best apparel could be provided in the town, and with such a train of men as he could there take up; which done, he made the greatest expedition he could into his own country, where he was royally received as prince, and shortly after joyfully crowned King. And being quietly settled in the regal seat, he presently despatched ambassadors to Lycabas, his

father's foe, and his father-in-law, whose ambassade contained these two points, the one to entreat a peace for his people, the other to crave a pardon for his wife ; who willingly granted both the one and the other, whereby he now lived in great quiet and tranquillity. A marvellous mutability of fortune which in the space of a month could bring him from happy joy to heavy annoy, and then from annoy again to greater joy than his former joy ! For as the sun having been long time overwhelmed with dark clouds, when it hath banished them from about it, seems to shine more brightly than at any time before, so the state and condition of this prince having been covered with the clouds of care, now it was cleared of them, seemed more pleasant and happy than at any time before. And, verily, as sharp sauce gives a good taste to sweet meat, so trouble and adversity makes quiet and prosperity for more pleasant. For he knoweth not the pleasure of plenty, who hath not felt the pain of penury ; he takes no delight in meat, who is never hungry ; he careth not for ease, who was never troubled with any disease. But notwithstanding the happy life of this prince, albeit he had as many kingdoms as he coveted, albeit he had such a wife as he wished for, yea, and enjoyed all things which either

God could give him, fortune further him to, or nature bestow upon him : yet to shew that there is no sun shineth so bright, but that clouds may overcast it ; no ground so good, but that it bringeth forth weeds as well as flowers ; no king so surely guarded, but that the gamesome goddess fortune will at least check him, if not move him ; no state so plentiful in pleasure, but that it is mixed with pain ; he had some weeds of woe which began to grow up amongst his flowers of felicity, and some chips of sorry chance did alight in the heap of his happiness. Yea, fortune presented herself once again upon the stage, and meant to have one fling more at him. For this prince possessing such a pleasant life, took great delight in good housekeeping, and gave such good entertainment to strangers that his fame was far spread into foreign countries : yea, the rumour thereof reached to the skies in so much that Apollo, as the poets report, having occasion to descend from heaven to the earth, went to see the entertainment of Admetus : who was so royally received by him, that the god thought good with some great kindness to requite his great courtesy. And as Philemon and Baucis, for their hearty housekeeping, were preserved by the gods from drowning when all the country and people besides were overflown, so the god Apollo meant to

preserve his life, when all his country and people then living should lie full low in their graves. And of the destinies of death obtained thus much for him, that if when the time and term of his natural life drew to an end, if any could be found who would willingly die and lose their own life for him, he should begin the course of his life again, and continue on earth another age. Now, when the time of his natural life drew to an end, there was diligent enquiry made who would be content to abridge their own days, to prolong their prince's life. And first the question was put to his friends, who were nearest to themselves ; then to his kinsfolk, whose love was as much of custom as of kindness ; then to his subjects, whose affection was as much for fear as for favour ; then to his servants, who thought their life as sweet as their master did his ; then to his children, who thought it reason that as their father did first enter into this life so he should first depart out of this life ; so that there could none be found so frank of their life to set this prince free from the force of death. Now Alcest, seeing the death of her dear husband draw near, and knowing her own life without his life and love would be but loathsome unto her, of her own accord offered herself to be sacrificed for her husband's sake, and to

hasten her own death to prolong his life. O loyal loving wife, O wight good enough for God himself! And yet had she a husband good enough for herself; for he loved her so entirely that though by losing her he might have gained life long time, yet would he not by any means consent to her death, saying, without her life his life would be more grievous unto him than a thousand deaths. But she persuaded with him against herself all that she could, saying, "I would not, O peerless prince, you should take the matter so kindly at my hands, as though for your sake only I offered up my life; for it is indeed the commodity of your country and mine own, being under your dominion, which driveth me hereto, knowing myself unable to govern them you being gone. And considering the daily war, the spoilful wastes, the bloody blasts, the troublesome strife, which your realm is subject to, I thought you had not loved me so little as to leave me behind you to bear on my weak back such a heavy burden as I think Atlas himself could scarce sustain. Again, considering that death is but a fleeting from one life into another, and that from a most miserable life to a most happy life, yea, from bale to bliss, from care to quiet, from Purgatory to Paradise, I thought you had not envied me so much, as to

think me unworthy of it. Do you not know that Cleobis and Biton had death bestowed on them as the best gift which God could devise to give them, and do you think it can do me harm, especially seeing I may thereby do you good?" "Alas, sweet wife," saith Admetus, "this your piety is unprofitable which is subject to so many perils. But if death be so good, good wife, let me enjoy it, who am enjoined to it, and to whom only it will be good, for death is only good to me whom it is given, not to you who are not appointed to it. For it is not lawful for any one to leave this life without special permission of the gods. And as in our court it is lawful for none to have access unto us unless by us he be sent for, so neither is it lawful for any one to appear before the heavenly throne, unless by the gods he be summoned. Neither will death be so easy to you as to me, whose nature is apt to yield unto it. For you see fruit which is not ripe will scarce with strength be torn from the tree, whereas that which is ripe falleth easily of its own accord. Therefore, good wife, give me leave to die to whom it will be only good and easy to die." "Why, sweet husband," saith she, "the god Apollo allowed any that would to die for you, otherwise to what purpose

was that which he obtained of the destinies for you? And for the uneasiness of death, nothing can be uneasy or hard unto a willing heart. But because your pleasure is so, I am content to continue my careful life, and with sorrow to survive you." And so left her husband, and went privily to the altar, and offered up herself to death to prolong her husband's life. Which when the King knew, he would presently have spoiled himself, but his hands had not the power to do it, for that by the decree of the destinies he must now of force live another age on earth. Which when he saw, he filled the court with such pitiful wailing, such bitter weeping, such hellish howling, that it pierced the heavens, and moved the gods to take remorse on his misery. And Proserpina, the goddess of hell, especially pitying the parting of this loving couple, for that she herself knew the pain of parting from friends, being by Dis stolen from her mother Ceres, put life into his wife again, and with speed sent her unto him. Who being certified hereof in his sleep, early in the morning waited for her coming. Seeing her come afar off, he had much ado to keep his soul in his body from flying to meet her. Being come, he received her as joyfully as she came willingly, and so they lived long time together in most contented happiness.

This seemeth strange unto you, Gentlewomen, that a woman should die and then live again, but the meaning of it is this, that you should die to yourselves and live to your husbands ; that you should count their life your life, their death your destruction ; that you should not care to disease yourselves to please them ; that you should in all things frame yourselves to their fancies ; that if you see them disposed to mirth, you should endeavour to be pleasant. If they be solemn, you should be sad ; if they hard, you having ; if they delight in hawks, that you should love spaniels ; if they hunting, you hounds ; if they good company, you good housekeeping ; if they be hasty, that you should be patient ; if they be jealous, that you should lay aside all light looks ; if they frown, that you fear ; if they smile, that you laugh ; if they kiss, that you clepe, or at least give them two for one ; and so that in all things you should conform yourselves to their contentation : so shall there be one will in two minds, one heart in two bodies, and two bodies in one flesh. Methinks I hear my wife wish me such a wife as I have spoken of ; verily, good wife, you wish your wealth great wealth, and God make me worthy of you wife, and your wish ; and if I might have my wish

I am persuaded you should have your wish. But if I be so good a husband as Admetus was ; if I forego father, friends, and living ; if I be content to change joy for annoy, court for care, pleasure for pilgrimage, for my wife's sake ; if I had rather die myself than she should ; if she being dead, with mournful cries I move the gods to raise her to life again ; I shall think myself worthy of so good a wife as Alcest was ! I shall hap to have a wife who with Cleopatra will sting herself to death with serpents at the death of her Antonius ; who with Hylonome will slay herself at the death of her Cyllar ; who with Singer will vanish away into air for the loss of her Picus ; and who with Alcest will be content to lose her life to preserve her Admetus !

END OF VOL. I.

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